

Learn How Your Child's Interests Can Lead to Their Ideal College

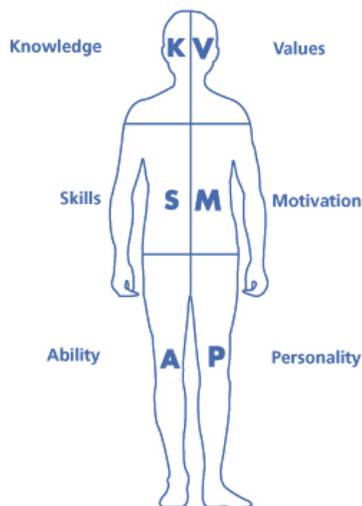
My friend's child graduated from school with an engineering degree. Greg got a prestigious job at an engineering firm right out of school and started earning a high income. Greg and his parents were so happy. They thought, with his degree in engineering, he was set and found a career that he would love and prosper. It's a parent's dream for their children.

All seemed well on the outside so I was shocked a year later when Rose told me, "Greg quit his job suddenly. I don't know what's going on!"

Greg had come to an important realization about his career: he hated it. Unfortunately, he only discovered this after investing years and over a hundred thousand dollars in an education and training. He had been chasing a "good" and reliable job and hadn't realized that working in the field required enjoyment of difficult work, being highly decisive, and being authoritative. He could do these tasks to a certain degree but more was required than he realized or wanted to do on a daily basis. He left work each day feeling completely drained.



CAN DO WILL DO



The truth is, finding out the eligibility requirements for most jobs is the easy part. You can search the Internet, do research or work with a guidance counselor to discover how much training or what kind of education it takes to be an attorney or an engineer. This is the "Can Do" part of any job.

But there is another component in determining career happiness. That component is the "Will Do" part of the job. Is your child motivated to do the job? This is also called "suitability." Suitability means more than a personality fit. It's the motivation, attitudes, interests, work values, and interpersonal skills that are tied to the specific job. These are the factors that will help determine if your child will **truly enjoy** the job.

Research shows that if a person's job contains at least 75% of what they naturally like to do, they will be three times more successful.

As parents, we want our child to be successful in whatever job or [career](#) they choose. Enjoyment and performance are strongly linked. When people enjoy a task, they tend to do it more, and get better at it. Good performance generates acknowledgement, which leads to a positive self-image, which then causes them to enjoy the task even more. It's a cycle of success! In Greg's case, he had all the know how to do the job but the job didn't have enough of what he naturally likes to do to make him willing to do the job.

How do you help your child find a role that will contain at least 75% of what they naturally like to do which, in turn, will help determine their ideal college?

Here are some tips to help you out:

#1 – Pay Attention. There are some cues that can give you insights into what your child's interests are. Take notice of the following:

- *What do they ask for as gifts?* My son recently mentioned he wanted a camcorder for Christmas. This completely surprised me. When I asked why, he mentioned he is interested in doing visual effects in movies. I knew my son was interested in computers but I never realized he would use it in movies. My niece, on the other hand, wants cooking-related books, supplies and opportunities. She loves watching the kids' cooking competitions on TV and acts out the scenarios afterwards.
- *What do they like to do in their downtime?* When I say downtime, I mean outside of their normal extracurricular activities. Maybe they like putting together Lego kits or creating something out of Legos on their own. This kind of activity suggests an interest in building complex structures and following difficult instructions in a systematic way.
- *What kinds of activities do they like to do during school breaks?* Is your child asking to go to engineering, creative, or outdoor camps? My youngest loved going to theater camps. I thought for sure it meant he wanted to be an actor. It turns out that he really loved learning about the direction and technical aspects of the theater. He enjoys directing others, creative thinking, and taking risks. My friend's son preferred chess camp and enjoys the analytical and strategic aspects of planning ahead to gain advantage. He loves the challenge and quiet competition.
- *What T.V. shows or YouTube videos do they like to watch?* A friend's child is fascinated with everything having to do with Survivor-types of activities. She enjoys physical challenges, endurance tests and the excitement of pressure to perform under tough conditions. She likes athletics, high-energy environments, team strategies and tests of courage. Another friend's son loves anything to do with animals. Saving them, helping them thrive, and training them. He wants to work with animals in some capacity, though he is not sure yet exactly how.

#2 – Start a Conversation. Many parents have one or two conversations about this topic, but what many may not realize is that you need to start early and have discussions frequently. You can start when your children are in elementary school and continue to have them as they grow up. It would be interesting to compare what similarities or differences you hear in their replies over time. You will also notice plans and ideas change and take shape as your child gains more world and educational experience. Just as my son’s interest changed from an interest in theater to an interest in visual effects, your child’s ideas will mature and you can be a great support system as they navigate their way through these ideas.

Here are some conversation starters:

- *What do you like to do?*
- *What activities would make you so happy if you could do them every day?*
- *What do you find exciting and fun?*
- *What do you love to do that some of your friends don’t?*
- *What scares you?*
- *What do you wish your school was teaching you instead of what you are learning now?*
- *What do you wish you had more time to do?*
- *What would you do if you had an extra day off from school each week?*

When you first have these conversations, you may get vague answers like “I love to play video games.” But the key point is you are starting to plant the seed in them to start thinking about what they enjoy and why they enjoy it. These conversations will help you create a game plan for getting your child on a career path to the right job—one that sets them up for success. In these competitive times, starting early is also increasingly important to ensure your child can land the right career.

Would you like a fast pass in identifying jobs your child would enjoy? If your child is already in high school, you most likely need a shortcut to identify their interests. I am a training and assessment professional with 20 years of experience in helping individuals target their best traits. I help families support their children in getting into dream schools and finding the right career fit. NOTE: Your child must be at least 15 years old to complete the assessment.

Go to www.myidealcollege.com and check out the different packages. If you have any questions, please send me an email at support@myidealcollege.org or give me a call at 678-761-3550.