

First steps to a first job

Helping young adults find employment, build skills and gain independence.



REMEMBER YOUR FIRST JOB?

Whether you loved it or hated it, it probably taught you a lot – from money management to responsibility to discovering what you wanted (or didn't want) to do with your life. Your children may now be ready for a similar experience – and to gain a new perspective on the value of money and hard work. Here are a few tips to help them land a great job.

Start early. Whether they're after summer work or a part-time gig, it's best to start looking well in advance.

Prospective employers need time to conduct interviews and train. For example, many employers who hire summer staff begin recruiting as early as January.¹

Put together a resumé that stands out. Online samples can provide a good framework. It's okay if your child doesn't have actual job experience – highlight volunteer roles, babysitting gigs and even school activities that showcase their skills.

Ask your network. Sit down with your young job seeker and make a list of everyone who might be able to help.

You never know who may be connected to a good opportunity.

Explore government programs.

Canada has a number of programs designed to help youth prepare for and find employment. Check out youth.gc.ca to learn about opportunities and access the Canada-wide job bank.

Apply, apply, apply. Have your young adult scour local classifieds and online job sites. School guidance offices often have job boards. Job hunters can also hit the pavement and visit local businesses to ask if they're hiring.

Ace the interview. Practise typical interview questions together so your child knows what to expect. It's a good idea to know a little about the company and have a few questions ready to ask. Being punctual and showing enthusiasm for the job can also help an applicant stand out.

Keep at it. There's a good chance they'll hear "no" from many of the places they apply to – or they won't hear anything at all. Encourage them not to take rejection personally and to keep trying.

The best jobs go to those who actively go after them. By equipping your young job hunters with strong employment-seeking skills, you'll be helping to set them up for success, both now and in the future. ■

¹ www.macleans.ca/work/jobs/10-summer-job-search-tips-for-students/