Talk about the future, together.

Conversation cards and a short guide that help families talk about school, work and the future. Draw a card, take turns, and listen. There are no right answers.

How to use the cards

- Pick an age group and one or two themes, or use the whole deck.
- Take turns to draw a card and read it out. The person who draws can answer first or ask someone else.
- Cards marked "Everyone answers" are for the adults too. Young people often enjoy hearing your story.
- Anyone can pass. A card can go back in the pile for another day.
- Stop while it is still enjoyable. Two or three good conversations are better than ten rushed ones.
- Car trips, meal times and walks work well. Sitting side by side can feel easier than face to face.

Theme

Interests
Follow their energy. Ask "What do you like about it?" before you ask whether it could be a job.

Worries
You do not need to fix a worry. "That makes sense" often helps more than a solution.

Study and work options
If neither of you knows the answer, look it up together. Not knowing is a good place to start.

Strengths
Be specific and notice effort as well as results: "You kept going when it got hard."

Money
Talk about money calmly. Nobody needs to share their own finances for this to be useful.

Values
There are no wrong answers. Values can differ between generations, and that is okay.

Age group

Primary school Foundation to Year 6

Early secondary Years 7 to 9

Senior secondary Years 10 to 12

School leavers Finishing school and after

Print on A4, cut along the dashed lines, and keep the cards in an envelope or a jar on the table.
The Career Table, a Career Calling site. Free to print for family, school and library use.
careertable.careercalling.com.au

INTERESTS

What is something you could do for hours without noticing the time?

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

INTERESTS

If you could spend a whole day learning about anything, what would you choose?

Primary school / Early secondary / Senior secondary

THE CAREER TABLE

INTERESTS

What do you like watching, reading or playing at the moment? What do you like about it?

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

INTERESTS

Which jobs have you noticed around you, at school, in shops, online or nearby? Which ones look interesting?

Primary school / Early secondary

THE CAREER TABLE

INTERESTS

What did you want to be when you were younger? Has that changed?

Everyone answers

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

INTERESTS

What kind of problems do you enjoy solving: puzzles, people problems, fixing things or making things?

Early secondary / Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

INTERESTS

Would you rather work mostly with people, with ideas, with your hands, or with nature and animals? Why?

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

INTERESTS

Is there a subject you used to dislike that you now find a bit more interesting?

Early secondary / Senior secondary

THE CAREER TABLE

INTERESTS

If you could follow someone at work for a day, whose job would you pick?

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

INTERESTS

What is something new you would like to try this year?

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

STRENGTHS

What is something you have got better at this year? How did you do it?

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

STRENGTHS

When do friends or classmates come to you for help? What do they ask you about?

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

STRENGTHS

Name one strength you see in each person here.

Everyone answers

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

STRENGTHS

Tell us about something hard that you kept going with, even when you wanted to stop.

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

STRENGTHS

Do you like to plan things carefully, or work them out as you go?

Early secondary / Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

STRENGTHS

What would your best friend say you are good at?

Primary school / Early secondary / Senior secondary

THE CAREER TABLE

STRENGTHS

Which of your skills could be useful at work, even if it is not a school subject?

Early secondary / Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

STRENGTHS

When do you feel most proud of yourself?

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

STRENGTHS

What is something you could teach someone else?

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

STRENGTHS

Think of a group you were part of, in class, sport or anywhere else. What role did you take?

Early secondary / Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

WORRIES

When you think about finishing school, what feels exciting and what feels worrying?

Early secondary / Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

WORRIES

Is there anything about the future you would like to understand better?

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

WORRIES

Tell a story about a time a plan did not work out, and what happened next.

Everyone answers

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

WORRIES

Do you ever feel pressure to choose a particular path? Where does it come from?

Early secondary / Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

WORRIES

What would help you feel more ready for your next step?

Early secondary / Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

WORRIES

What is one thing you are unsure about right now? You do not need an answer to it yet.

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

WORRIES

If a friend was worried about choosing a career, what would you tell them?

Early secondary / Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

WORRIES

Is there anything we say at home about school or jobs that we could say differently?

Early secondary / Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

WORRIES

What helps you feel calm when you have a big decision to make?

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

WORRIES

What is a mistake you learned something useful from?

Everyone answers

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

MONEY

What are some different ways people earn money?

Primary school / Early secondary

THE CAREER TABLE

MONEY

What matters most to you in a job: the pay, the people, the work itself, or something else?

Early secondary / Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

MONEY

If you had some money of your own to look after each week, what would you do with it?

Primary school / Early secondary / Senior secondary

THE CAREER TABLE

MONEY

Which jobs do you think pay well? How could we find out?

Early secondary / Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

MONEY

What is something you saved up for, or would like to save up for?

Everyone answers

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

MONEY

Study can cost very different amounts. What would you want to find out about costs before choosing?

Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

MONEY

Would you like to earn while you learn, study first, or do a mix of both?

Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

MONEY

What does "enough money" mean to you?

Early secondary / Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

MONEY

What could you do to earn a little money now, or when you are old enough?

Primary school / Early secondary / Senior secondary

THE CAREER TABLE

MONEY

Is there a job you would do even if it paid less? What would make it worth it?

Early secondary / Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

STUDY AND WORK OPTIONS

What do you know about the different ways people learn a job: university, TAFE, apprenticeships and traineeships, or learning on the job?

Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

STUDY AND WORK OPTIONS

Which school subjects might open doors to things you are interested in?

Early secondary / Senior secondary

THE CAREER TABLE

STUDY AND WORK OPTIONS

Who could we talk to about a job you are curious about?

Early secondary / Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

STUDY AND WORK OPTIONS

If your first plan does not work out, what could plan B look like?

Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

STUDY AND WORK OPTIONS

What path took you to the work, study or caring you have done? What surprised you along the way?

Everyone answers

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

STUDY AND WORK OPTIONS

What would you like to find out on a work experience day?

Early secondary / Senior secondary

THE CAREER TABLE

STUDY AND WORK OPTIONS

Do you think people choose one career for life, or change along the way?

Early secondary / Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

STUDY AND WORK OPTIONS

What would a good first year after school look like for you?

Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

STUDY AND WORK OPTIONS

Name three jobs you know nothing about. Let us look one of them up together.

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

STUDY AND WORK OPTIONS

Would you like to work close to home, travel for work, or work from anywhere?

Early secondary / Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

VALUES

What makes a job a good job, in your opinion?

Early secondary / Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

VALUES

Who is someone you look up to? What do you admire about them?

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

VALUES

What is something you care about that you would like your work to help with?

Everyone answers

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

VALUES

Would you rather help people, create things, discover things or lead things?

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE

VALUES

How important is it to have time for family, friends, culture or faith outside work?

Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

VALUES

What does being successful mean to you? Does it mean the same thing for everyone?

Early secondary / Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

VALUES

What is a way you like to help other people?

Primary school / Early secondary

THE CAREER TABLE

VALUES

What would you like people to say about the way you work?

Early secondary / Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

VALUES

What change would you like to see in your community or in the world?

Early secondary / Senior secondary / School leavers

THE CAREER TABLE

VALUES

What makes you feel happy at the end of a day?

All ages

THE CAREER TABLE