

Springboard to Success Workshop

Dear Wonderful Parent,

Today, your son or daughter attended a workshop called Springboard to Success. This workshop is perfect for students looking to move successfully into Higher Education or out into the world of work. We know that kids very often don't talk much about their day, so we thought we'd give you a little insight into what was covered and, more importantly, what you can do to support and encourage the continued use of these tools and techniques.

KEY TOPICS

Communication Skills

Communication skills are vital for success in life.

In this section we looked at all the different ways we communicate including words, body language, gestures, facial expression, in writing and by listening. We also established that words themselves make up only 7% of communication (no wonder texts and emails can get us into trouble!!).

We discussed Open Questions and also looked at what Active Listening is.

Importantly, we looked at communication skills associated with interviews – why clothing is important, why do you need a firm handshake, why we need to take care with tattoos and piercings and why things that aren't technically communication (like being prepared with research and questions) still communicate a LOT about who you are.

Ten Things that require Zero Talent

When it comes to success in life, we tend to equate this with qualifications and talent – but those things on their own are never enough. Mindset and behaviour are just as important to employers, perhaps even more so.

Your CV needs to show that you have the right qualifications but it also needs to show that you are more than just that. Employers value things like a good work ethic, timeliness, passion, great attitude and these are the things that will help you to succeed in a job once you get your foot in the door.

HOW YOU CAN HELP...

- Help your son/daughter to fully prepare for interviews – including offering to check their cover letters and CVs
 - Ensure they have the right clothing
 - Practise interview skills with them
 - Ask them to tell you about how body language can be used to create better communication.
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- Encourage your son/daughter to think about the mindset and behaviours that were discussed today
 - Ask them if they believe they have the right mindset and motivation and, if not, explore (don't judge) what is missing
 - Encourage them to set goals to improve areas of weakness
 - Look at their CV with them and see how they can show who they are as a person (not just their qualifications).

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KEY TOPICS

How Do I Stand Out from the Crowd?

In many ways this is just a continuation of the previous section. Here we looked at what their individual strengths are and how they can use those to stand out – not just their skills but also their personal qualities.

We also highlighted the importance of extra-curricular activities and achievements (DofE, Football team, Volunteering etc.) and making sure that these are all present on your CV.

Laser Habits

“A habit is a routine or a behaviour that is performed regularly and, in many cases, automatically.”

- The quality of our lives often depends on the quality of our habits
- Same habits – same results
- Better habits – anything is possible

We looked at the power of laser habits – small 1% improvements in all areas of their lives that, collectively, lead to far greater success. We looked at how this approach took the British Cycling Team from sporting pariahs to sporting heroes in a matter of years.

The students were asked to identify 1% changes that they could make in key areas of their life and they were also asked to think about what the first step would be for each of those changes.

Focus and Wellbeing

We looked at Steven Covey’s 90/10 principle – 10% of life is what happens / 90% of life is how you choose to respond to what happens.

Things go wrong in life, stuff happens, and we have no control over this. What we can ALWAYS control is how we choose to respond e.g. in the adult world if you are ‘cut-up’ by another driver you can choose to shrug it off (no stress) or to allow it to anger you. If you are angry of course, you may end up driving aggressively or erratically yourself which could lead to problems.

It is always better to focus on the things in life that you can positively influence or directly control. Worrying about ‘what if’ or seething about a situation that you can’t control just leads to stress and, sometimes to illness. To help with this concept we looked at another Steven Covey principle known as the ‘Circle of Influence’.

When you replace “Why is this happening to me?” with “What is this trying to teach me?” - everything changes.

HOW YOU CAN HELP...

- Ask them to share what they wrote down today about their skills and qualities
- Explore the things that they have already done that will help their CV stand out
- If the answer is, not much, then help them to find some volunteering opportunities or something else that plays to their strengths that will make them stand out.

- Discuss the changes they have identified and provide any necessary support/resources that they may need
- Encourage them to set deadlines and help them to track their progress.

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KEY TOPICS

Getting to the end of 6th form and then moving into Higher Education or the work environment is exciting and scary. It can also be extremely stressful. Everyone operates at their best when they are in their comfort zone or, preferably being stretched a little. The secret is not to get stretched too much – or the opposite – get bored.

We gave the students a ‘Pressure Gauge Quiz’ so that they can check their stress levels and take action if there are any problem areas.

Fiscal Facts

There were a number of short sections today on fiscal subjects including pensions, tax, credit rating and students loans. We have sent a factsheet about this to the school but have also included it on here for your information.

HOW YOU CAN HELP...

- Whenever you hear your son/daughter being angry, upset or worrying about something they can't control, ask them to think about the Steven Covey principles
- Discuss ways in which they can think differently about the situation or actions they may be able to take to resolve it
- Have a go at the Pressure Gauge Quiz yourself!

- Get involved with discussions on these topics with your son/daughter
- Help them to understand any areas they are unsure of
- When they move to university or away from home for work, support them to ensure they have the right bank account(s) in place.

From the Resilient Me ‘Springboard to Success’ Workshop

Fiscal Facts #1 - Tax

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What is tax?

- Tax is money that is collected by HMRC (His Majesty's Revenue & Customs)
- It's used to pay for things like the armed forces, schools & colleges, rubbish collection, and much more

What kinds of tax do we pay?

- Income tax – this is a percentage of all the money you earn
- VAT (Value Added Tax) – this is charged on goods and services we buy
- National Insurance – this pays for the NHS, benefits (like Universal Credit) and state pension. It's similar to income tax. You automatically get a NI number when you turn 16

How do I pay tax?

- Employed – PAYE
- Collected automatically through your employer before you get paid
- Self-employed – Self-assessment
- You must set aside a percentage every time you get paid and you will have to declare your earnings once a year. It is advisable to get help from an accountant or a business adviser (often free through the bank) if you plan to set up your own business

How much tax will I pay?

- Personal Allowance
- Currently £12,570
- Basic Rate 20%
- Between £12,570 and £50,270
- Higher rate 40%
- Between £50,271 and £150,000
- Additional rate 45%
- On income over £150,000

What about NI contributions?

- Employees pay Class 1 NI
- Deducted from your salary before you get it
- Don't start paying until your weekly salary is £242 (from July 2022)
- 13.25% for weekly earnings between £243 and £967
- 3.25% for any weekly earnings above £967
- Self-employed people pay Class 2 & Class 4 NI
- An accountant will advise on this

Please note, the figures used in this handout were correct in September 2022, but they will change over time. Check for the latest information on websites such as Gov.uk.

Fiscal Facts #2 - Student Loans

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A student loan is when you borrow money to pay for college or university

- Three levels
- Cover tuition costs
- Cover living expenses (means tested)
- Additional help (special circumstances)

How do I get a loan?

- Apply through www.gov.uk/student-finance
- How much can I get?
- Tuition Fees – up to £9,250
- Maintenance – up to £9,706 but it's means tested and depends on all kind of things such as where you are studying, is it full or part-time, do you have a child to support etc.
- Additional Help – varies enormously
- Bursary, Scholarships, Grants – these usually come from the universities or charities and, again, vary enormously

How do I repay the loan?

- If you are employed, payment is taken directly from your pay before you get it (like Tax and NI)
- If you are self-employed, repayments are based on annual income
- Bursaries, grants and scholarships do not need to be repaid

How much will I pay?

- You don't repay anything until your income exceeds £524 per week or £2,274 per month
- You will pay 9% of earnings that exceed this amount
- If you earn £2,500 per month you will pay 9% of £226 which is £20.34

How long do I have to pay for?

Your loan will be written off 30 years after the April of the year you start paying in

Other useful information...

- Your student loan will not affect mortgage applications

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Fiscal Facts #3 - Your Credit Score

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What is credit?

Credit is the ability to borrow money or access goods or services with the understanding that you'll pay later e.g. bank loan, phone contract, student loan, mortgage

What is a credit score?

- It's a number that shows how likely you are to be accepted for credit
- The higher the score the more likely you are to be accepted for a credit application

How do I get a good credit score?

- Open a bank account and NEVER allow it to go into overdraft
- Get a starter credit card
- Take out a student loan

What is a credit card and how do I use it?

A credit card is like a loan; it allows you to buy goods and gives you a short, interest-free period to pay back (up to 56 days)

- ALWAYS pay your full balance every month
- NEVER withdraw cash on a credit card – no interest free period and ATM charges
- Stick to a maximum percentage of your available balance (10%)
- BE VERY CAREFUL!!!
- Check your credit score
- You are entitled to one free credit check per annum from companies like Experian

Why do I need a good credit score?

- Phone contracts
- Online shopping
- Car loan
- Mortgage

Fiscal Facts #4 - Pensions

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What is a pension?

It's the monthly income you get when you retire

When do I get my pension?

66 years old

What types of pension are there?

- State Pension – comes from your NI contributions
- Defined contribution pension (pension pot)
- Workplace
- Personal
- Defined benefit pension (almost non-existent now)
- Final Salary

Why do I need to think about a pension now?

- The earlier you start – the bigger the pot
- Smaller percentage of your income

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