Parents,

Your role is important in your student’s career decision-making process. These tips will help you to be a productive career coach for your student, enabling them to make smart decisions about their major and career.

**Perceived Parental Influence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Influence</th>
<th>Parents Perceive They Have:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>26%</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Influence</th>
<th>Students Perceive Parents Have:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>56%</td>
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From: *National Association of Colleges and Employers*

**Three Roles as Career Coach**

- **Listener**
- **Advocate**
- **Network Resource**
Listener

- **Provide non-judgmental listening and honest feedback.**
  - The key word here is “non-judgmental”.

- **Initiate conversations on career plans.**
  - Talk with your student about the courses and activities she or he is enjoying and how your student is doing. Remember to ask if their interests have changed; most students change majors at least once!

- **Listen, respond, and ask questions.**
  - Your willingness to listen and be a sounding board will keep you in the loop.

- **Help your student clarify ideas, priorities and concerns.**
  - Give feedback on specific abilities you see in your student; this will help develop a solid sense of self.
  - Help them develop independent decision-making skills.

Advocate

- **Encourage involvement in campus activities.**
  - Extracurricular activities provide the opportunity for students to gain valuable skills, including leadership, planning, organization, and time management.

- **See the situation from your student’s perspective.**
  - Empathize with your student on the difficulty of the process and the number of decisions they have to make.
  - Remember what it was like when you were their age.

- **Encourage your student to avoid procrastination and to begin the career planning process early.**
  - Support your student’s exploration of new areas of study and interests.
  - Encourage your student to take full advantage of all resources available to them.
  - Be prepared to support your student through the ups and downs of the career search process.
Network Resource

- Help your student develop contacts for information, advice, and assistance in career planning and job searching.

- Refer your student to colleagues, friends, neighbors, family, and community members with experience related to their interests.

- Offer encouragement, and help them learn how to approach people and ask for this kind of information.

- Suggest your student make connections with faculty.
  - All faculty schedule weekly times to help students with questions about class or academic progress.
  - Students ultimately need professors to provide references for jobs/internships, scholarships, or graduate school applications.
  - The greatest success in course work and the most substantive references are often proportionate to the level of communication students have with faculty.

- Suggest an internship or part-time job.

What is NOT your role?

- Pressuring them into selecting a major
  - 70% of students say they feel some pressure.

- Giving a bias or prejudice against certain careers
  - Don’t panic if your son or daughter is excited about majoring in something like History, English, or Art.

- Constantly asking the question, “have you made a decision yet?”
  - Listen for indications from your student that you m, and then back off!

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70% of College Students say they feel pressure to select a major.