

ARTICLE:

Helping Young People Create Vision:

What might happen when your children and grandchildren learn how to develop their own life vision?

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If you're reading this article, you're likely a high achiever – someone who has created value for others and experienced success, perhaps having built a business. Somewhere along the way, either consciously or subconsciously, your vision likely contributed to your drive, focus and achievement. Some people are born with a natural inclination to set goals and work intentionally toward them. Others derive life-changing value from having someone as a role model or mentor, teaching and helping them on how to develop and work toward their own life vision.

WHAT VISION MEANS TO YOUNG PEOPLE

Vision in its most basic form is simply seeing ahead to what the future might look like, and positioning yourself to take advantage of it in a way consistent with your values. It's having a clear picture that there is something beyond where you are today, and having a hope or dream for what that something can be. Even for young people, vision can change how a person wakes up and walks into the world every day. When children have vision, they can make decisions in the context of how their choices will affect their future desires. Without vision, every decision is a coin toss where thoughts about the potential consequences or ramifications aren't present, and obviously cannot be weighed.

With so many societal influences facing adolescents and teenagers every day, vision gives them a filter. If they envision a happy and successful future for themselves, and they understand some of what it takes to get there, it just may sway them into better decision making in the midst of daily peer pressure.

HOW TO HELP A YOUNG PERSON UNDERSTAND AND DEVELOP THEIR VISION

Sit down with a child, grandchild, niece or nephew and have a vision casting conversation. Find out what they enjoy most in their daily life. What are they passionate about? Do they have a sense of what their life might look like in the future? Stimulate conversation around why they like to do certain activities or why they're interested in a particular vocation. Ask them what they think it takes to become successful in that line of work. Stimulate them to envision and think through the steps. For younger children, you

might be vision casting into the next day. For teenagers, you may be vision casting into the next year in school or life beyond high school.

Visual references are extremely helpful. If they've always wanted to go to a particular University, get their brochure. If they've always wanted to be a lawyer, tour the county courthouse. If they've wanted to be a fireman, ask for a tour of the local facility. In the case of a tour, communicate with the professionals onsite in advance and explain your exercise. Ask them to talk about the steps it took to get them where they are; to comment on good or bad choices they made and how it influenced their current situation.

Afterward, have a dedicated debrief with the young person. Find out what they learned, felt and noticed. Through talking about it, the experience will be further cemented in their learning.

MODELING AND MENTORING VISION

Consider creating vision boards together. Simply take a large piece of poster board and attach pictures or phrases that represent goals. You can each do your own board or you jointly do one together. Then set a regular time, perhaps every 90 days, to review, discuss and update the board. Consider the impact you can have by having your own board and sharing it with them. Help them understand the intrinsic value in hard work. Allow them to see that success requires concerted and focused effort over a long time and that even really successful people make mistakes or sometimes miss their own benchmarks. When that happens they learn from it and then keep moving forward. Help them see that successful people don't allow setbacks to stop them from moving in the direction of their dreams.

If you have questions about this or other planning issues, please give us a call at 216-765-0121.