

# Getting Started

Choices  
2010-2011

**Choices** is published annually to encourage parents/guardians\* and students to keep themselves informed about the opportunities available to them, both in and beyond secondary school. It is the goal of this publication to provide information that will help with the decision making process that must occur around the course selection process.

## Planning Guide

At the centre of this book there is a course selection planning guide to assist students and their parents/guardians with the course selection process. Students are encouraged to use this guide and keep it, where possible, in their academic or career portfolio. Also visit [www.myBlueprint.ca/tdsb](http://www.myBlueprint.ca/tdsb) to create an education plan.

## Course Selection Process

The final decision on course selection for students under 18 years of age rests with parents/guardians. Therefore, keeping in touch with the school's guidance counsellor is of great importance. Consideration of the student's achievement for the past several years and the advice of the school, aid in choosing a program within reasonable reach.

## Course Selection Sheet

Program selection for September will be made in February (course selection sheets usually contain the list of courses offered to students). Course selection sheets are an important vehicle for the educational planning process and are required each year. It is the responsibility of all students and their parents/guardians to complete course selections by the prescribed date. Subsequent modifications to a student's program will be made for sound educational reasons only. Please note that where enrolment is insufficient, a course may be withdrawn or cancelled.

\* Where parent/guardian is found it is inclusive of caregivers and a significant adult.



Where appropriate the competencies from three Areas of Learning: Student Development, Interpersonal Development, and Career Development have been identified with this symbol to enable students and parents/guardians to see the significance of the guidance program and its relevance to education and career planning.

## Creating Futures: Guidance and Career Education Program

*Choices Into Action, Guidance and Career Education Program Policy for Ontario Elementary and Secondary Schools, 1999*, is the basis for delivery of guidance and career education programs, grades 1 – 12. By the end of secondary school, students are expected to:

- understand the concepts related to life-long learning, interpersonal relationships, responsible citizenship, and career planning;
- develop learning skills, social skills, a sense of social responsibility, and the ability to formulate and pursue educational and career goals;
- apply this learning in their daily lives, both at school and in the larger community.

Guidance and Career Education is a school-wide program which:

- provides all students with the opportunity to understand, develop and apply the concepts in three areas of learning: Student Development, Interpersonal Development and Career Development.
- provides structures and processes which identify the unique needs of all students.
- provides supportive settings, programs and resources to prepare students for life-long learning and responsible citizenship in a global environment.

The Guidance and Career Education program is comprehensive, developmental and applied and offers learning opportunities where students can Build Character, Build Careers, Build Success. This is accomplished with clearly stated competencies for grades 1 to 6, grades 7 and 8, and grades 9 to 12. The development of the competencies is accomplished through a range of program delivery components including the Ontario curriculum, orientation and exit programs, the academic and career portfolios, career exploration activities, workshops, seminars, and small groups, mentorship programs, peer assistance programs and individual assistance and short-term counselling.

The program's effectiveness is determined by students' achievement of competencies and ongoing communication with parent/guardian and community partners.

**Website** For additional information on Choices Into Action, please refer to:  
<http://www.tdsb.on.ca/programs/guidance>

# Building Character

Respect Responsibility Empathy  
Kindness & Caring Teamwork Fairness  
Honesty Co-operation Integrity Perseverance

## Building Success

Student Success is about meeting the individual learning needs of each and every student. This includes understanding their learning style, capitalizing on their strengths, abilities and interests. Schools are providing students with more opportunities to customize their high school experience and build on their strengths and interests through a variety of new and enhanced learning options. Every secondary school in Ontario now has a team comprising a principal, a Student Success Teacher or teachers, special education teachers, and a guidance counsellor. Together, they:

- Identify and support struggling students
- Provide more options for learning
- Monitor student progress

Other strategies included in Student Success are:

**Student Success Teams**  
**Expanded Co-op Credits**  
**Specialist High Skill Majors**  
**Dual Credit Program**  
**Grade 8-9 Transitions**

How do I find out more? If you are interested in any of these programs contact your Guidance Department to find out which opportunity may be available at your school.

**More information is available at:**  
[www.edu.gov.on.ca/morestudentsuccess](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/morestudentsuccess)

**BUILD CHARACTER**  
**BUILD SUCCESS**

## Building Character

The Character Development Initiative in the TDSB recognizes that academic achievement, character development, and civic engagement are inextricably linked and must be interwoven into a student's educational experience. It provides students with the tools for increasing academic achievement, a solid foundation for ethical decision making, and more opportunities to use their voice to influence outcomes. This initiative is based on Finding Common Ground: Character Development in Ontario Schools, K-12.

Character attributes will provide students with high standards for behaviour, making decisions that are personally empowering, and creating quality relationships. This translates ethical knowledge, skills, and attitudes into action. Positive action and decision making provide society with individuals who have attained the

knowledge, skills, and values they need to become responsible members of a democratic society.

Character development is about community development. It is about helping our students learn and practise character attributes, which will help them not only do their best, but also be their best.

Character development is a shared responsibility. At its best, it permeates the entire life of the school as it is woven into policies, programs, practices, procedures, and interactions. It recognizes that a respectful, safe, and orderly school climate enhances learning.

Students need to develop self-discipline and personal management skills that will enhance their communities, workplaces, and lives. Together, schools and communities can make this happen.

**Go to:** [www.tdsb.on.ca/character](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/character)

### Key Beliefs and Principles of Character Development:

- Is a cornerstone of a civil, just, and democratic society
- Provides the foundation of our publicly funded education system
- Develops the whole student (heart, head, and hands)
- Contributes to a healthy, safe, and orderly school environment
- Creates a collaborative school where teachers spend less time disciplining and more time teaching
- Provides high expectations for learning and behaviour
- Engages students in their learning
- Is embedded in what we do
- Is about community development
- Is universal and transcends racial, ethnocultural, linguistic, religious, gender, physical and intellectual ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and demographic or socio-economic factors
- Respects Constitutional rights, federal and provincial legislation, curriculum guidelines, and, in particular, the grounds outlined in the Ontario Human Rights Code and TDSB Human Rights Policy
- Strives for an ever-growing depth of self-awareness, self-discipline, and understanding
- Encourages sharing the responsibility to model the universal attributes upon which we find common ground

### Career Development

A career is your path through life. It includes education, learning, different jobs, work (paid & unpaid), family life, friendships, community activities and leisure activities. Career development requires students to understand themselves and opportunities in both the world and world of work so that when presented with opportunities they are prepared to make decisions about their future.

Career development requires students to learn how to make informed choices to ensure their successful transition from elementary to secondary school and from secondary school to further education, training, and work. It involves understanding self, goal setting, decision making and opportunity awareness.

The world of work is rapidly changing. As existing jobs become more complex and new jobs demand increased levels of education, career development is more critical than ever before. Through career awareness student engagement is enhanced because they are taught the relevance of what they learn in school to the world and make connections to their hopes, aspirations and future plans.

### What is a Job?

A job is the position a person holds doing specific duties. For example, consider the occupation of a doctor. The doctor's job is working at Toronto General Hospital. People usually change jobs more often than they change occupations.

### What is an Occupation?

An occupation is similar work for which people usually have similar responsibilities and develop a common set of skills and knowledge. Occupational titles include: Cashier, Chef, Insurance Agent, Nurse, Teacher, etc.

### What is a Career?

A career is your life path or life story in progress. It includes, learning, work (paid and unpaid), family life, friendships, community and leisure activities.

## High Five Plus One



### Change Is Constant

We change constantly, and so does the world around us— including the working world.

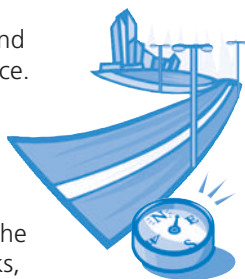
Chances are that a single occupation will no longer take workers from the beginning to the end of their working lives. Adaptability is an important skill to carry into the world of work.

### Learning Is Ongoing

Graduating from high school or a post-secondary program doesn't mean that your education is complete. Education is not limited to classrooms in a school. Opportunities to learn are everywhere! Learn to recognize them and make your learning a lifelong experience.

### Focus on the Journey

Travelling through life is like travelling down a road: having a destination gives direction, but most of the time is spent moving along. Pay attention to the journey, with all of its pitfalls, sidetracks, opportunities, and highways to new destinations.



No matter what career path is chosen, there are some things that remain constant for all people. Canadian career development specialists originally called these constants the "High Five." Some children have already learned about the High Five in school. A sixth principle has been recently added, giving us the "High Five Plus One."

### Follow Your Heart

Dreaming about your future can help you to understand what you really want in life. Knowing what you want and keeping it in mind can give you the motivation you need to deal with life's challenges. Listen to your inner voice.

### Access Your Allies

The journey of life is not taken alone. Life is like a team sport, and your team members are your friends, family, teachers, and neighbours. Any of them can be willing and helpful allies when it comes to judging what steps to take on life's path.

### Know Yourself

The career planning constant or principle "Know Yourself" is the latest addition to the High Five Plus One. Knowing your true self by examining your values, beliefs, and interests in as much detail as possible will help you with career decisions as you travel along your career path.

