

From school to job

Information for Parents

Dear Parents

You have a daughter or a son in the 7th, 8th, 9th or 10th class. Your son or your daughter must now decide on a job or a school for further education.

How does the school help?

The school prepares students from the 8th and 9th classes for the choice of a job or a school for further education. Ask the teacher what exactly he or she does in the school.

How does career counselling help¹?

Career counselling centres provide information and personal interviews. This offer is free and confidential for students.

School and career advice certainly assists young people in the choice of training after the 9th or 10th class. However, the responsibility together with the principal work remain with those concerned. Therefore your son or your daughter must do a lot for him or herself, until he or she finds a place for further education after the 9th or 10th class. For many, this is difficult. There is a lot that they have never done before. It is therefore very important for mothers and fathers to help.

What must young people do for themselves?

Get to know jobs

- What professions are there? What does one do there? What must one be good at?
- Read job descriptions, find out for yourself, talk to the career counselling professionals
- Attend information events
- Get some practical work experience.² During a brief work placement one gets to know a profession

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Each canton has at least one career counselling centre.

The addresses can be found at your school, commune or under: www.svb-asosp.ch

The career counselling centre is often better-known under a particular name or abbreviation:

In German-speaking Switzerland BIZ, Laufbahnzentrum

In French-speaking Switzerland OP, OSP, OROSP, CIO, CIP, OOFFP

In Italian-speaking Switzerland orientamento, UOSP

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In German-speaking Switzerland Schnupperlehre

In French-speaking Switzerland stage d'information professionnelle; stage en entreprises

In Italian-speaking Switzerland stages

or business better. A work placement usually lasts 2 to 3 days. Businesses also often use these as a selection tool: they want to get to know youngsters. Whoever makes a good impression during a work placement has a better chance of getting an apprenticeship in that business.

Getting to know oneself and choosing a job or school

What am I good at in school, what have I learnt in my spare time or from my family? (e.g. to speak other languages, to clean, to look after children, to shop) what job, what kind of training is right for me?

- Discuss possible jobs with parents and ask them what kind of work is right for me? Talk to the teacher: am I capable of the necessary language skills, mathematics that I need? Where are my weak points? How can I prepare myself in school for further education after the 9th or 10th class?
- Make an appointment with the career counselling centre and ask the careers adviser: am I sufficiently prepared for the job I would like to learn? What can I do if I have any knowledge gaps?
- Choose a suitable career or a school for further education and 1-2 alternatives.

Look for a place for further education (generally in the Autumn of the 9th class)

Where are there trainee positions in which I can learn my chosen job? Where are the schools for further education? What must I do to get a trainee position? Those who bear in mind a few rules while looking for a trainee position have a better chance of success!

Talk to your schoolteachers if there are questions or problems. Obtain information or make an appointment with the career counselling centre for a personal discussion.

The choice of a job or a school for further education needs time for consideration and time for undertaking various activities.

Your sons and daughters need to be aware that you, as parents, support them.

You can now find out from examples what mothers and fathers can do.

Speak to the teacher

Laura is in the 8th class. At home she never talks about choosing a job or school for further education. What is the matter her parents ask? Her mother goes to the school and asks the teacher if Laura has also not shown any interest in the choice of a job or a school.

Stay aware of the different possibilities

Achmed is in the 9th class. Like many other youngsters, he wants to be an information technologist. He applies for apprenticeships but only receives negative replies. At a parents' evening, his parents learn there are too few apprenticeships in information technology. They tell Achmed he should contact the career counselling centre for a personal discussion. Achmed comes home with a new idea. As he is good at mathematics and is interested in technology, he now looks for an apprenticeship as a poly-mechanic. He knows now that in this job he will also have something to do with computers. If he wants, he can specialise in information technology after completing his apprenticeship.

The family has expectations

“When does Nicholas start his studies?” ask relatives at home in the village. “In Switzerland many things are different to what you think”, reply Nicholas’s parents. Nicholas is good with his hands and likes cars. He will become an automobile mechanic. That is a good training and the job will suit him. We are proud of our son who has achieved so much. Anyway, it is not so easy attending school when you speak a different language.” As a car mechanic, Nicholas can find work anywhere in the world !

Insufficient language knowledge

Jennifer is a very intelligent girl. But as she only came to Switzerland when she was 15, she does not understand the language in school sufficiently for a demanding training. Jennifer and her parents learn that after obligatory schooling Jennifer can do a preparatory school year to prepare for a job, or she can prepare for an apprenticeship or do a two-year basic professional training. For Jennifer and her parents everything is unfamiliar. They must first get to know the possibilities in detail. Jennifer is also disappointed. She had dreamt of going to gymnasium. Her parents console her: “Perhaps you need more time than others. As soon as you have done enough work to cover the gaps in your knowledge, then you can do a more demanding basic job training and possibly you can study later. You will manage it!”

Job or marriage?

Samira will soon be 16. A young man comes visiting. He asks her father: “May I marry Samira?” Her father replies: “I am delighted that you care for Samira. But you know we live in Switzerland. Life is different here. Here it is very important for men and women to have a job. So Samira must first train for a job. Later she can decide for herself if she wants to get married.”

A father accompanies his son

David is in a special small class for those with learning difficulties. He can do a brief trial apprenticeship as a woodworker. He knows that in a carpentry business he can do a two-year basic training, if the preliminary trial work placement is satisfactory. So he is quite nervous. He also feels uncertain because he does not know the way very well and yet he wants to be punctual. His father encourages him: “You already know a lot about this job. You try very hard. On the first day I will come with you to the entrance of the firm. We will leave home early enough. If we have enough time, we can even walk about a bit. That helps when one is nervous!”

Use your contacts

Jane is a good student. She has excellent marks in French, German and mathematics. In addition, she can speak, read and write English. She considers various jobs, goes to information events and gets some brief work experience. It is now clear she wants to do a commercial apprenticeship. She sends off many applications but only receives negative replies. Her father works in a building firm and tells his boss that his daughter is looking for an apprenticeship. “Ask our office. They also take trainees,” says the boss. “I will do that. My wife can also ask in the hospital where she works. Haven’t we also got a neighbour who can perhaps help us?” thinks her father.

Dear Parents,

if you have questions about your daughter’s or your son’s choice of job, waste no time. Ask the teacher or the career counselling centre.