

connexions

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Options at 16

A guide for parents and carers

www.connexions-northamptonshire.org.uk

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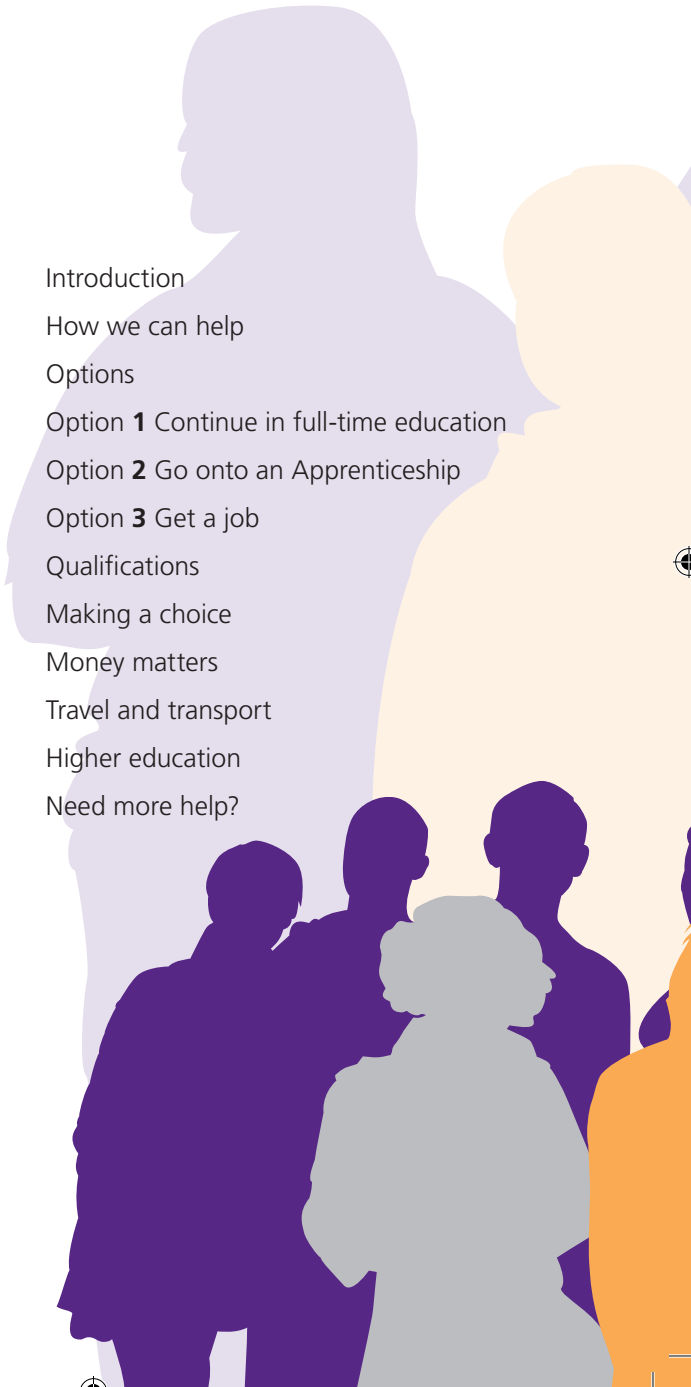
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Introduction

In Year 11, your son or daughter will need to decide what they want to go on to next. Making a choice about the future isn't easy as there are lots of options to choose from.

As a parent or carer, we know you play an important role in helping your teenager to decide which is the best option for them. This leaflet aims to support you to help them with their choices and show you where to find useful information and guidance.

How we can help

Connexions Northamptonshire gives young people information, advice and practical support to help them make good choices about careers, education and jobs so that they can ultimately have a better life and future. We also support them with more personal problems, such as money, bullying and relationships.

We don't try to replace the support you can give - we work to make sure that you and your son or daughter get the support and help they need.

Options

What are my teenager's options after Year 11?

Your teenager will have the following **three** options at the end of Year 11:

- **Option 1**
Continue in full-time education at their school's sixth form - if it has one - or go to another school's sixth form or a college.
- **Option 2**
Go on to an Apprenticeship, or
- **Option 3**
Get a job.

If your teenager doesn't feel ready to start a course, Apprenticeship or job, they can do an Entry to Employment (e2e) programme. For more information, your son or daughter should speak to their Connexions Personal Adviser.

September Guarantee

Your teenager will be guaranteed a place on a suitable course or Apprenticeship at a sixth form or college, or with a training provider by the end of September 2010 - if they want one!

Top tip!

Check out the latest Ofsted reports for sixth forms and colleges at:

www.xplore.uk.com

Option 1

Continue in full-time education

There are lots of full-time courses available at sixth forms and colleges. These courses can be general qualifications, such as A levels, or vocational qualifications, such as BTEC National Diplomas.

Look on **XPLORE** at www.xplore.uk.com for details about the courses your teenager can go on to after Year 11.

My teenager wants to study full-time - should they choose a sixth form or college?

Choosing where to study is important. Your teenager should consider:

- what courses are on offer at the sixth form or college;
- the size of the sixth form or college and its facilities;
- how they will get there;
- how well past students have done and what they have gone on to do; and
- what other activities they offer outside of school hours.

Make sure you and your teenager go to sixth form and college open days - the above list will give you an idea of the type of questions you will need to ask. For the dates of current open days, visit our website at www.xplore.uk.com

Option 1 continued

How does my teenager apply for a full-time course?

Each sixth form and college will have their own application system. This can include:

- completing an application form;
- attending an interview;
- completing an assessment; and
- getting a reference from your son or daughter's tutor.

Remember!

Your teenager won't know their GCSE results until **Thursday 26 August 2010**, so colleges, sixth forms and training providers will use their predicted grades, tutor references, interviews and any assessments to decide what course to offer them.

Apply online at **www.xplore.uk.com**

Each Year 11 student will be issued with a username and password. This enables them to create an online application. This can be sent to their chosen school or college.

www.xplore.uk.com

XPLORE is the main place to find information on courses, Apprenticeships, e2e programmes and other learning opportunities for 14- to 19-year-olds, in Northamptonshire.

Use **XPLORE** to find out what course your teenager can go on to after Year 11, as well as what qualifications they will need to get on the course, what's involved, how to apply and more!

Option 2

Go onto an Apprenticeship

On an Apprenticeship, your teenager will learn hands-on skills and gain qualifications, such as an NVQ, Key Skills and a technical certificate, while working for an employer. They are available in a variety of occupational areas, including customer services and hospitality, and can last between one and three years.

There are two types of Apprenticeship programmes:

Employed Apprenticeship

Also known as a waged Apprenticeship. Your teenager will be employed by a company, paid a wage and receive training from a training provider.

Programme-led Apprenticeship

Also known as an unwaged or non-employed Apprenticeship. Your teenager will start their training and attend a placement, with a view to being employed at the end of it.

How does my teenager find an Apprenticeship?

Finding an Apprenticeship is not as straightforward as applying for a course as they are usually only offered through an employer. Your teenager can find an Apprenticeship by:

- looking on **www.xplore.uk.com** to see which training providers offer Apprenticeships;
- register for the vacancy service to ensure they are notified of new vacancies straight away: **www.jobs4you2.org.uk**;
- register at **www.apprenticeships.org.uk** to view all the Apprenticeships available nationally;
- asking local employers about any vacancies and checking local newspapers; and
- making sure their Connexions Personal Adviser knows what they are looking for.

Option 3 Get a job

www.jobs4you2.org.uk

All the latest local jobs, Apprenticeships and training opportunities, and advice on making a winning application! New vacancies added everyday!

If your son or daughter is interested in getting a job, remember they won't be allowed to start full-time work until after the last Friday in June in Year 11, provided they are 16 before the end of August.

You should encourage them to choose a job with training. If they find a job without training, you can suggest part-time study or distance learning whilst they are working.

How does my teenager find a job?

The first thing they need to think about is what type of job they are looking for. If they are unsure they can speak to their Connexions Personal Adviser in school and use some of the guidance software available on their school network or via our website: www.4you2.org.uk

The range of jobs available to your son or daughter after they leave school is quite limited. There are also limitations on where they can work because of their age.

There are many different places to find jobs - your teenager could:

- look on www.jobs4you2.org.uk;
- look in local newspapers, shop windows, company websites;
- ask friends or family; or
- contact local employers directly by writing, phoning or emailing them.

For more information about finding and applying for jobs, log on to: www.4you2.org.uk

Did you know?

Qualifications are available up to level 8, but your teenager can only study up to level 3 straight after Year 11.

Qualifications

There are so many different qualifications - how do they choose?

As well as choosing what subject they want to study, your teenager will need to think about what type and level of qualification they want to do. When thinking about what level to study at, your teenager will need to consider what qualifications and grades they will leave school with. The table below gives examples of what qualifications are available to your teenager at different levels and their typical entry requirements.

Level	Qualifications after Year 11	Typical entry requirements
Level 3	A and AS levels Advanced or Progression Diploma BTEC National NVQ level 3 Advanced Apprenticeship	GCSEs at grade A* to C or other level 2 qualifications listed below
Level 2	GCSEs Higher Diploma BTEC First NVQ level 2 Apprenticeship	GCSEs grade D to G or other level 1 qualifications listed below
Level 1	Foundation Diploma BTEC Introductory NVQ level 1 Entry to Employment (e2e)	GCSEs at grade E to G or entry level qualifications listed below
Entry level	Entry level certificate Asdan award Skills for working life Entry to Employment (e2e)	No qualifications needed



Visit www.qca.org.uk for more information about all qualifications or www.xplore.uk.com for information on local provision.

Qualifications continued

I've heard about a new qualification called the Diploma - what is it?

Diplomas are an exciting new qualification which give young people the chance to apply their learning to a particular industry, for example construction or hospitality.

Diplomas can be at different levels and after completing a Diploma, your teenager could go on to further study, a job, training or higher education.

There are 10 different Diplomas being offered in schools across the county - ask your son or daughter to talk to their school's Connexions PA or careers co-ordinator for more information, or look on www.northants14-19.org.uk for local information or the national Diploma website: www.yp.direct.gov.uk/diplomas

Keep your eyes open!

Look out for events in your teenager's school or local area where you can come along and speak to sixth form and college staff, employers and training providers.

Making a choice

How does my teenager decide which option to choose?

It's a good idea for your teenager to think about any career ideas they have - this will help them decide what to move on to next. Don't worry if they haven't got any ideas about what they want to do - we can still help them!

If your teenager is unsure about what career they want to do...

They can use Kudos - a career matching program which may be available on the computers in their school, which is a good place to start as it will give them some career ideas - or go to www.4you2.org.uk and follow the link to Fast Tomato, an online careers and guidance site.

Even if your teenager hasn't got a definite career goal in mind at the moment, they will still need to think about what they can do after Year 11.

To get them thinking about the future, you could ask them:

- 👉 What subjects are they good at and what do they enjoy?
- 👉 How do they like to learn? For example, in a classroom or in the workplace?
- 👉 Do they prefer exams or coursework?; and
- 👉 Do they want to go to university in the future?

If your teenager has some career ideas...

They could use **Jobs4U** at www.connexions-direct.com/jobs4u to find out the different routes and qualifications needed to get into lots of jobs. Once they've done this, they will need to look into what courses are available locally at www.xplore.uk.com

Money matters

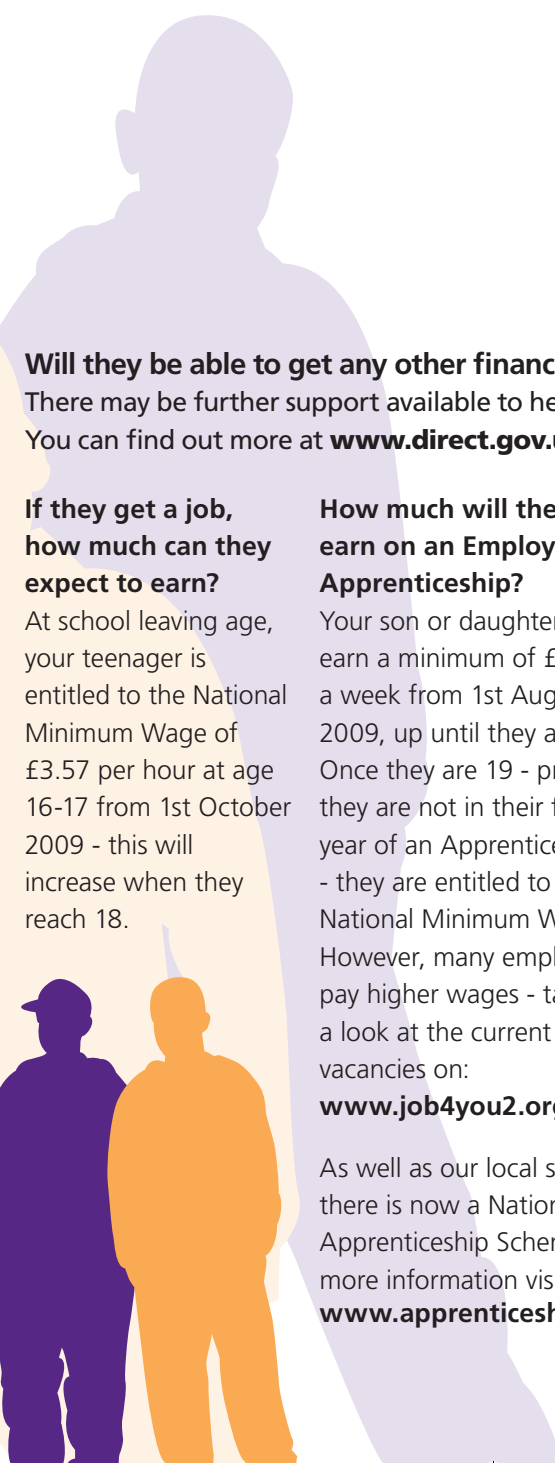
Your teenager will need to consider what money they will get if they stay in education, start an Apprenticeship or get a job.

Will my son or daughter have to pay any course fees?

If your teenager stays in full-time education at a Local Authority (LA) sixth form or a public sector college, they will not have to pay any course fees and you will continue to get the benefits you already receive for them.

Will my teenager get any extra money whilst learning?

If they carry on at a sixth form, go to a college or do a Programme-led Apprenticeship, your teenager might be able to claim the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA). This is a government scheme that can provide extra cash for young people continuing in learning after the age of 16. More information is available at www.direct.gov.uk/ema or ask for an application pack from the school.



Will they be able to get any other financial help?

There may be further support available to help with the costs of learning. You can find out more at www.direct.gov.uk/moneytolearn

If they get a job, how much can they expect to earn?

At school leaving age, your teenager is entitled to the National Minimum Wage of £3.57 per hour at age 16-17 from 1st October 2009 - this will increase when they reach 18.

How much will they earn on an Employed Apprenticeship?

Your son or daughter will earn a minimum of £95 a week from 1st August 2009, up until they are 19. Once they are 19 - provided they are not in their first year of an Apprenticeship - they are entitled to the National Minimum Wage. However, many employers pay higher wages - take a look at the current vacancies on:

www.job4you2.org.uk

As well as our local site, there is now a National Apprenticeship Scheme. For more information visit: www.apprenticeships.org.uk

Travel and transport

Whatever your teenager wants to do, they will need to think about how they will get there.

How will my teenager get to college or sixth form?

Some sixth forms and colleges put on special transport for full-time students. Details of these buses and any costs can be found out by contacting the institution – telephone numbers, email and web addresses for all schools and colleges is available on: **www.xplore.uk.com** (click Schools and Colleges)

What if they are in a job or on an Apprenticeship?

They will need to pay for their own transport to and from their job or Employed Apprenticeship. For further information on Travel and Transport follow the links on:

www.4you2.org.uk

If they are on a Programme-led Apprenticeship, your son or daughter may get some of their travel fares to and from their place of learning and work placement reimbursed if they use public transport. They will need to keep their tickets and give them to their training provider. This is in addition to any weekly EMA payment they might receive.

Higher Education

My teenager wants to go onto higher education eventually - what should they do?

Often A levels can be seen as the traditional route into university. However, more universities are accepting other level 3 qualifications, such as BTEC National Diplomas, and soon the new Advanced and Progression Diploma qualifications or even a mixture of qualifications.

It's a good idea to plan ahead and do a bit of research into higher education as, quite often, the subject can be just as important as the type of qualification. For more information visit: www.ucas.com/parents

There is also the option of studying part-time or by distance learning at a local college, university or the Open University.

Your teenager may be part of the Aimhigher group in school and have access to lots of information and experiences to encourage them to consider higher education – they have events for parents and carers too! Find out more by asking in school or go to: www.aimhighernorthamptonshire.ac.uk

GCSE results day is Thursday 26th August 2010

Don't worry if your teenager doesn't get the grades they were expecting as there may be other courses available - drop in to a Connexions Access Point for help and advice. Addresses and directions are on: www.4you2.org.uk

Need more help?

- If you want to find out more about your teenager's options:
 - visit www.connexions-northamptonshire.org.uk, our corporate website, and click on Parents/carers;
 - visit our young people's website www.4you2.org.uk;
 - contact our free information helpline on **0800 73 13 2 19**; or
 - call into your local Connexions Access Point (for opening times look at www.4you2.org.uk/about/accesspoints).

Connexions Corby

T 01536 275860 E samcorby@4you2.org.uk

Connexions Daventry

T 01327 705831 E samdaventry@4you2.org.uk

Connexions Kettering

T 01536 513862 E samkettering@4you2.org.uk

Connexions Northampton

T 01604 828400 E samnorthampton@4you2.org.uk

Connexions Rushden

T 01933 352870 E samrushden@4you2.org.uk

Connexions South Northants

T 0800 73 13 2 19 E samtowcester@4you2.org.uk

Connexions Wellingborough

T 01933 222626 E samwellingborough@4you2.org.uk

Meeting your needs

We can provide this information in other formats or languages. Please contact: Head Office, 2 Bouverie Court, The Lakes, Northampton, NN4 7YD. Tel: 01604 630033.

Comments and suggestions?

We are keen to have your comments about this booklet and any suggestions for how we can improve it. Please call **0800 73 13 2 19** or email us at: info@4you2.org.uk