

The Many Paths to Discuss Education and How to Find Them



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Education is a broadly defined term and is one of the many paths families can explore in order to develop a strong family legacy. A solid education provides the foundation for a good life. To discuss education and all its merits with your children may seem simple, but it can be intimidating if undergone without a plan. Developing a strategy before embarking is a good way to ensure the message is delivered in a confident and clear manner. Education, much as life, is a journey and describing it as such may prove helpful. Thinking of the approach as a path may allow you break down the discussion into 3 separate parts.

Know the Path

Knowing the path is about destination. Education can be lifelong endeavor but it can also be a means to an ends. It can be helpful to discuss it in finite terms. This path leads to a destination and the destination is the goal. Discussions around your child's interests can help determine where their path may take them. If your child has as ambition to become a doctor then her or his path must take them through medical school. If leading the family business is the aim, then the path would lead to that company with as few detours as possible. The shortest distance between 2 points is always is straight line. If your child does not seem to be interested in anything specific then establish ways to help craft behaviors which will help them achieve once they realize what they want to pursue. Helping with goal setting and incentivizing responsible behavior are great ways to prepare children for what may follow.

See the Path

Seeing the Path is about story. People respond and connect with story. As you discuss education, the paths which have been walked by family members and friends can illuminate the path for your children. What one can do, so can another. This can be a comforting feeling. Discuss with your children the pioneers of their interests and the paths in which they strode. Additionally, the cost of an education can be enormous. Discussions on how to fund it can be beneficial to both parents and children. Parents should develop a plan as soon as they are able and adhere to it. Tools such as 529 plans or educational trusts are both great ways to fund educational goals. Children can be informed in stages as to what the plan entails and should be informed that it does come with a price tag. Whatever the plan, it should be thought out, discussed and understood for the benefit of all. Family meetings conducted monthly, quarterly, or annually are great ways to ensure everyone stays on the same page.

Walk the Path

There will always be a great burden on parents. The question of how to best serve your children will loom forever. Walking the path is about ensuring that any discussion regarding education is cemented with evidence the parents are living the values they are laying forth. Great leaders inspire through the same method. You must practice what you preach. A parent's formal education may have concluded by the time children arrive, but adherence to the principles of life long learning can be adopted at any age. There are no shortage of ways in which the practice can be expressed. Either through professional or personal development, there are infinite paths from which to explore. Attempt to be a light in this world for your children to emulate and shine forth.

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