

# Wellness Wednesday



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## Here's How To Prepare Your Teen For A First Job

*Experts share their best advice to help your teen feel confident and capable entering the working world.*

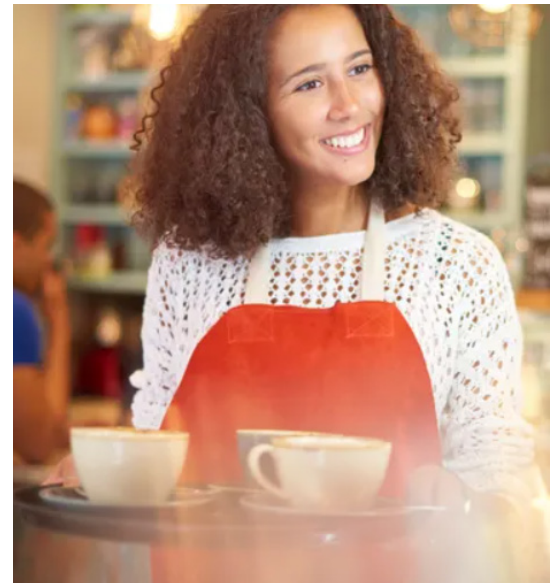
There's no replacement for on-the-job learning, and there's no better way for your teen to gain certain skills than by working that first job. Whether it's bussing tables, babysitting, mowing lawns or making lattes, employment offers a taste of independence and a chance to prove how responsible and mature they can be.

A teen who doesn't show much interest in household chores or keeping track of homework may surprise you with a sudden surge of initiative when they see the promise of a paycheck on the horizon.

That said, don't assume that your teen will know how to act in a professional setting. You'll want to set them up for success by talking through a few fundamentals before they begin.

A great place to start is by sharing your own early work experiences.

"Give examples of successes and failures," said Sarah Kirk, a former school counselor in Oklahoma. "What do you wish you would have known?"



## Here is some more guidance you may want to share:

Wait until you're ready and find the right fit, said Steve Sharp, a school counselor in Pennsylvania. "Teens who are ready to work have often demonstrated readiness through household chores, volunteer activities or involvement in school or community clubs or organizations."

Before they start job-hunting, teens should be "prepared to follow basic multi-step directions, be able to communicate with adults, and manage their time," Sharp added.

Some jobs, like mowing lawns or babysitting for neighbors, are better suited as starter positions for kids who don't have as much experience. They also let kids try out a certain kind of work before making a commitment.

Among businesses, some are more open than others to working with young people. "Try to find a job that is open to helping teens build skills needed in the workplace," said Kirk.

In addition to getting any necessary work permits from the school or labor department (laws vary by state), teens should think about "how many hours they realistically can balance, transportation and related safety concerns," said Sharp.

He added, "The current labor market has made it possible for youth to start in many jobs with higher wages than ever before and even sign-on bonuses." Sites like Snagajob offer teens a place to look for entry-level work. You can help your child draft a resume, listing their skills and aptitudes if they don't have work experience yet, and role-play a job interview with them.

Volunteering events like the MLK Day of Service can also give you the chance to explore different kinds of work alongside your kids.

### **Complete your chores at home, regardless of what else is going on.**

Assigning chores at home can help teens build up some of the skills they will need for the workplace.

"The key here is the chores and responsibilities being routine and expected. Suppose the child does not have to complete the chores and responsibilities when they are busy. In that case, it does not help them to learn time management and the importance of fulfilling responsibilities despite other obligations," explained Kirk.

Sharp added that "providing the child with meaningful feedback can be beneficial." If the dishes aren't clean, say so and explain what they need to do differently. This prepares them for learning similar skills at a real job.

### **Be on time.**

Teens may be used to making loose plans with friends and need to learn that it's not considered "fashionably late" when reporting to a supervisor. It's also not the minor infraction of arriving tardy to class.

Remind them that others are dependent on their timely arrival, and return from breaks, in order to meet their own obligations. A mother can't leave home to make her meeting until the babysitter has arrived.

"A job requires you to make sacrifices. This means that sometimes you will have to miss something desirable due to your responsibility of going to work," said Kirk.

### **Establish good phone etiquette.**

There's nothing stronger than the bond between a teen and their phone. Giving your teen opportunities to practice setting their phone aside, perhaps for family dinners, can help them learn to withstand being offline while on the job. Getting caught texting by a supervisor isn't quite the same as being spotted hiding your phone under your desk during social studies class.

Remind them to take off their headphones and silence or turn off their phone as soon as they arrive at their worksite.

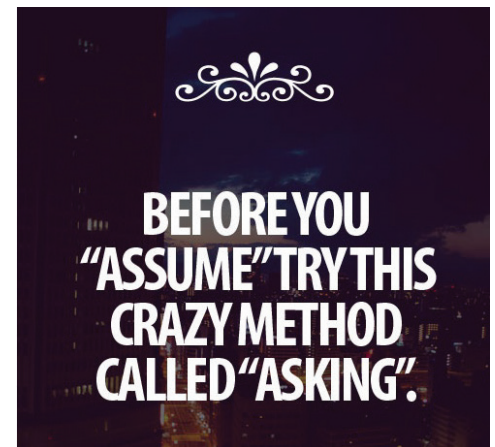
Review when an appropriate time for them to check their phone might be at their specific job. Do they get an official break? If they're babysitting, they should wait until the kids are in bed and any cleanup is taken care of before they start scrolling.

Taking pictures or video of co-workers, the workplace, or any children they are in charge of is probably off limits, too, and certainly shouldn't be posted to social media.

Any thoughts or feelings they have about their work, or the people they work for, also need to stay offline. Complaining about a work-related situation on social media, thinking no one they work with will see it, could spell disaster.

### **Ask, don't assume.**

Teens should know that they'll have a lot of questions those first days on the job, and should err on the side of asking for clarification rather than guessing what to do. This may not feel natural to shy teens, or those likely to think that they are being a bother, but it's essential in the beginning — and employers will expect it. Keith Howard is commissioner of New York City's Department of Youth and Community Development. He oversees the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), which provides jobs to 100,000 teens every year and is the largest and longest-running program of its kind in the country.



"If you have a question, ask the question. Don't be afraid to ask a specific question," said Howard. Your teen will do a lot of job learning by carefully observing managers and co-workers, but any remaining questions need to be asked.

"There are often 'unspoken rules' at places of employment," said Kirk. Teens can ask their "supervisor and other employees about the expectations of the job, including attire, logistics and other important questions."

### **Practice problem-solving skills.**

A big part of job success is knowing how to work with others. "Talk through difficult situations with peers at school and in activities," recommended Kirk. Think about different ways to respond in similar situations. You might ask, "How do you respond when someone has a different way of doing things than you?" Kirk suggested, and share examples from your own experience to get them thinking.

"Often underdeveloped communication skills or difficulty responding to feedback appropriately are the biggest barriers to youth I've worked with in entry level positions," Sharp said.

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## Show initiative, but don't overstep authority.

It's good to show enthusiasm for the job, but don't start out by coming up with your own tasks, or beginning your own projects before getting the go-ahead from a supervisor.

Simply asking something like, "Should I go ahead and fill the salt shakers now, too?" or "Should I put the laundry in the dryer once the cycle is complete?" is a way to show initiative at the same time as respect for authority.

Likewise, when they finish with one task, they should ask a supervisor what they should tackle next instead of deciding for themselves or waiting for someone to hand them something else to do.

## Clean-up conscientiously.

Whether it's a break room or a neighbor's kitchen, help teens practice leaving spaces as clean, or cleaner, as they found them — especially when those spaces aren't theirs.

## Master a few financial basics.

"It's a new feeling to earn your own money," said Howard, who got his own first job via SYEP when he was a teen.

Youth who participate in SYEP get a course in financial literacy before they start working at their job sites. Your teen may not want to hear all the wisdom you have to impart about finances, but you'll probably want to help them out with a few pointers.

Before they get that first paycheck, remind them that some of their money will be taken out to pay taxes, or this may come as an unwelcome surprise.

Help them plan how to cash or deposit their check. Ask what they think they want to use their money for. If they have a long-term goal like getting a used car or paying college costs, you can help them calculate how much they should be putting into savings and how much they can use on other purchases.

It's often a good time for them to open up a bank account. You can walk them through checking their balance online so they can keep track of their spending and saving.

## Know when to call for help or any other emergency procedures.

If your child is working as a lifeguard or camp counselor, this will likely be covered in their training. In SYEP programs where youth are working with younger children, the first step, Howard explained, is to notify a supervisor without delay when an issue arises so that a teen can get guidance on how to handle the situation.

If your teen is off to babysit for a neighbor or relative, however, it's worth making a list of emergency phone numbers, both on their phone and an old-fashioned piece of paper to stick on the fridge, just in case. These include the parents' numbers, your number, the number of another adult who is responsive and lives nearby, poison control and perhaps a doctor or dentist.

As always, you'll need to strike a careful balance, both letting your teen know that you are there to support them, and, at the same time, that you believe that they can do this on their own.

"Let the teen explore and experience their first job independently," advised Kirk. "A big part of a first job is letting teens learn from their mistakes."

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# ROASTED STRAWBERRY ALMOND FLOUR MUFFINS

164 Calories | PREP TIME: 20 mins | COOK TIME: 30 mins | TOTAL TIME: 50 Mins  
YIELD: 12 servings | Course: Breakfast, Brunch, Snack | Cuisine: American



## INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 cup sliced strawberries
- 1/2 cup sugar
- cooking spray
- 1 1/2 cups almond flour
- 1/4 cup gluten-free oat flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 2 1/2 tablespoons unsalted butter, room temperature
- 3 large egg whites, or two large eggs
- 1/2 tablespoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup 0% Greek yogurt

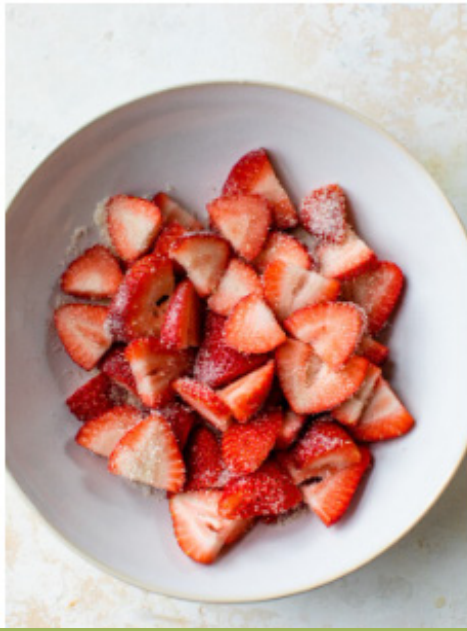
These gluten-free Roasted Strawberry Almond Flour Muffins are delicious and light, made with Greek yogurt, oat flour, and almond flour.

### How do you keep muffins moist and not dry?

Although only a little butter is used in these muffins, the Greek yogurt prevents them from becoming dry. And even though the berries are dried out by roasting them, they still add some moisture. Also, you want to make sure you don't over-mix the batter. Stir it just enough to incorporate the flour into the wet ingredients.

### Nutrition Information

Serving: 1 muffin, Calories: 164 kcal, Carbohydrates: 15.5 g, Protein: 6 g, Fat: 8.5 g, Saturated Fat: 1.5 g, Cholesterol: 7 mg, Sodium: 155.5 mg, Fiber: 2.5 g, Sugar: 10.5 g



## INSTRUCTIONS



1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Set the rack in the center.

### Roast the strawberries:

2. Toss strawberries with 2 tablespoons of the sugar. Place on parchment paper-lined sheet pan in a single layer and roast 25 minutes, until the strawberries release their liquid and caramelize.

### Prepare the muffins:

1. Meanwhile, line a muffin tin with 12 muffin nonstick liners and spray with oil.
2. Mix almond flour, oat flour, baking powder and baking soda with a whisk in a medium bowl.
3. In a large bowl with a hand mixer, mix and cream the butter and sugar on medium setting for about 2 minutes.
4. In a small bowl, beat the egg whites and vanilla with a whisk, add to bowl with butter/sugar mixture.
5. Mix in the yogurt, then flour mixture and mix on low speed until combined, 1 minute.
6. With a spatula, fold in the strawberries and spoon to lined muffin tins about 3/4 filled. (I used an ice cream scoop). Bake at 375F or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
7. Let cool before eating.

[https://www.self.com/gallery/try-this-5-minute-abs-workout-for-a-spectacular-core?CNDID=39033685&mbid=nl\\_082516\\_Daily\\_Hero4\\_sl&spJobID=981607100&spMailingID=9386191&spReportId=OTgxNjA3MTAwS0&spUserID=MTQ4MTQxNzIzNTEzS0#19482](https://www.self.com/gallery/try-this-5-minute-abs-workout-for-a-spectacular-core?CNDID=39033685&mbid=nl_082516_Daily_Hero4_sl&spJobID=981607100&spMailingID=9386191&spReportId=OTgxNjA3MTAwS0&spUserID=MTQ4MTQxNzIzNTEzS0#19482)

## FEATURED EXERCISE

# Featured Exercise ► **Plank With T Rotation — 45 seconds**

### » Do it:

Reps: 45 seconds

"This exercise strengthens obliques as well as the transverse abdominal muscle," says Laferrara. "I use this move a lot in a warm-ups as a way to activate your core before we get going and to open up the chest before we do any upper body movements," she adds.

- Start in high plank with your feet hip-distance apart.
- Now rotate your entire body to the right into a side plank with your left shoulder above your left wrist.
- Extend your right arm to the ceiling and continue to drive your hips up.
- Return to center position, then repeat on the opposite side.



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*Regular exercise can help you control your weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, and strengthen your bones and muscles. But if it's been awhile since you've exercised and you have health issues or concerns, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.*



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