

How to Make Your Child's Future Great

By Tamara Lim, Oxford-MIT Graduate and Founder of PrepWorks



Let's face it: Every loving parents' ideal future for their child is that they find their place in this world - for them to have a comfortable, self-provided life; well-adjusted and resilient to challenges; compassionate to those around them and be smart enough to make good decisions.

We all work for our children's futures, some of us make huge sacrifices to ensure these ends are realised. Wouldn't it be important to reflect on what we are trying to achieve for them? Are we guiding them in the right direction? Some say that nothing is certain except death and taxes. To that, I would like to add three more items: uncertainty, challenges and changes. Huge changes have occurred in the past 10 years: technology has transformed with smartphones, AI and the Internet of Things. Our children are completely different to what we were at their age. How can we ensure their futures if their lives are so different from ours?

Fortunately, we can identify areas that are likely to gain them a higher percentage of success than the age-old vision of pure academic excellence. After coaching over 50 high-achieving students a year and raising three kids of my own, I believe that education extends beyond our traditional view of it. My research, reading and experiences have amalgamated into these 5 key anchors:

1) Ensure they are AI-Ready.

McKinsey global institute projects that by 2030, AI will deliver additional global economic activity of around USD 13 trillion, 16% higher GDP than today. 70% of companies would have adopted at least one AI technology. Forbes mentioned that AI will be one of the most disruptive technologies, completing repetitive tasks faster and more accurately, paving the way for more creativity and innovation by the human workforce.

How, as parents, can we prepare our kids for this paradigm shift? Students should ramp up their technical skills - learn to work with AI and gain work experience related to computational thinking (not necessarily in coding). By understanding how to craft solutions in a way computers can execute them, they are able to pick up any coding language of the future.

2) Develop their Soft Skills.

Soft skills will set them apart from candidates they may compete with in the workforce. These include communication skills, teamwork, adaptability, time management and interpersonal skills. Unsurprisingly, jobs that require a significant amount of soft skills are unlikely to be replaced by AI. These include teachers, lawyers, CEOs and managers, psychologists, surgeons, artists and writers. However, far and few can beat a Computer Systems

Analyst with a healthy dose of soft skills.

3) Ensure they have the "T".

This concept boils down to having both breadth (the top portion of the T) and depth (the vertical portion of the T) - to know a little about various fields to connect the dots, and relate to other specialisations or cultures. They become adaptable to any industry, not relying on one skill (to avoid being overtaken by AI). The depth, or specialisation, keeps you at a higher level of expertise from the rest, ensuring job security.

4) Inculcate them with Life-Long Learning.

The spirit of lifelong learning is the key to being adaptable, paramount in navigating the ever-changing future. Understanding that learning does not stop once you complete university helps you stay curious and intrinsically motivated to know more. This allows you to self-reflect, to fail but not be discouraged, and to get up and improve.

5) Ensure Longevity and Quality of Life.

A healthy mind needs a healthy body. It is no use to be extremely successful but having an unhealthy and damaging lifestyle which could only lead to serious physical and mental health problems. High quality sleep, exercise, social connection and stress management are crucial aspects children need in their life. Therefore as parents, setting them up with these good habits

means we have given them the best life we can offer. We have to be role models: spend quality time with them, let them know they have our attention and we want to connect with them to impart these healthy habits.

Helping children discover their sense of purpose is what we can do at PrepWorks. Our inspirational tutors are here to introduce them to current trends, delve into subjects they might find interest in, or give a first-hand perspective of their opportunities in the future. Knowing what subject to read at university is half the battle in establishing the most important trajectory of your child's life.

PrepWorks is holding an event called **Discover Your Future at 10am - 12.30pm on 6th April 2024 at our office in TTDI**, where students meet and speak to top university graduates from Oxford, Cambridge and Ivy Leagues in subjects like law, computer science, economics, mathematics and medicine. Come find their inspiration here and learn how to reach their dreams - it all starts with exposure. Help your child figure out their place in this world, by having them meet the right people, who will enlighten their path on their journey to self-discovery.

To register or find out about our other holiday workshops or university preparation programs, **contact +6019 409 4037 or visit www.prep.works**