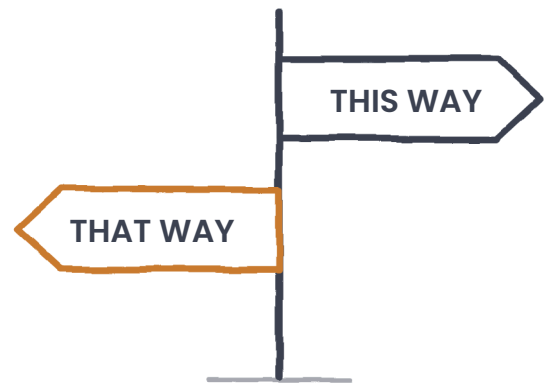


FACT SHEET • COLLEGE

Helping Your Young Person Make Decisions

Between sixteen and eighteen the decisions stack up fast: which course, which path after college, whether to take a job, who to spend time with. Each one can feel final, because at this age nothing has been decided before and there is no evidence yet that a wrong turn can be corrected. A calmer approach to choosing helps more than the decision itself.

**TIP 1****Ask what matters to them**

Before offering your own view, ask what they are weighing up and why. It shows the decision is theirs, and it often surfaces the real question underneath.

TIP 2**Slow big decisions down**

A choice that feels urgent rarely needs deciding today. Suggest sleeping on it, or talking it through twice on different days, so panic does not make the call.

TIP 3**Offer information, not instructions**

Share what you know or can find out, then step back. A young person who feels told what to do is more likely to resist it, even when you are right.

TIP 4**Normalise changing your mind**

Point out that a course, a job or a plan can be swapped later if it is not working. Most decisions at this age are a first attempt, not a life sentence.

TIP 5**Separate the decision from the worry**

Sometimes the anxiety is not about the choice itself but about disappointing someone. Ask directly whether that is what is going on.