

"It's Okay to be Different!" Career Guide for Multicultural Families

Families often experience conflict over career decisions when parents' expectations are different from their children's. For multicultural families, conflict is often inevitable for the parents and children who have different cultural backgrounds, as well as the generation gap. Let's take a look at some of the career-related conflicts of multicultural families and find out how to resolve them.



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Solutions from Case Studies

Children from multicultural families often experience conflicts with their peers from an early age because they are perceived "different" from others. Having a parent with a different native language might make family communication difficult, and it can also make children feel isolated and anxious. To be able to identify their child's career interest, aptitude, and path, parents will need to first understand the child's characteristics, and have an honest and open conversation about their conflicts and anxieties.

Q1 My children don't like to learn my first language.

Let them know that the bilingual family environment is actually advantageous for their career exploration and guide them in a systematic way so they can learn both their parents' first language. You can also suggest participating in bilingual speaking contests, or finding other opportunities where they can use their language skills.

Q2 My children are worried about whether they will be able to achieve their dreams in Korea.

Present various examples of foreigners who have become successful in Korea and explain that people can realize their dreams in countries other than their home countries. Cultural flexibility and openness, in addition to bilingual capabilities, are great strengths that children from multicultural families should take advantage of when developing their talents and careers.

Q3 My children don't have any dreams or aspirations.

Encourage them to read biographies of famous historical figures and to create their own encyclopedia to develop interest in the dreams and challenges of successful historical figures. Even if their role models are not famous people, if your children have someone that they can look up to, you can recommend books related to their career and occupation.

Source: Ministry of Education/National Institute for Lifelong Education (2017) <Teacher's Manual for Multicultural Students' Career and Advancement Guidance>



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**Conflicts in multicultural families,
worry no more and
get help!**

Danuri (www.liveinkorea.kr ☎ 1577-1366), a multicultural family support portal, provides assistance, such as psychological tests, legal counseling, emergency support for families in crisis, and connection with external counseling agencies, so that multicultural families can improve relationships among members of the family. In addition to career counseling, Danuri provides career support workshops for children from multicultural families, and offers special lectures on age-appropriate learning, communicating with children, and checklists for each grade level.



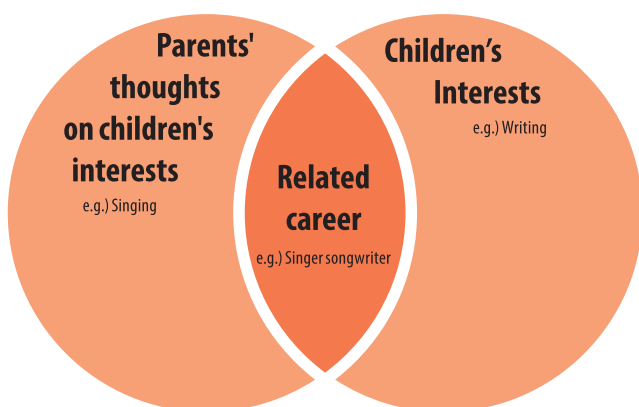
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Find the Intersection of Different Opinions About Career Path

Make a Rainbow Venn Diagram with your children

Parents and children who are born and raised in different environments and times naturally have different ideas. To resolve career-related conflicts between parents and children, they often need to work together to find a middle ground. Sit down with your children and make a list of what you and your children think the children's interests are. Then, think about what can be placed in the intersecting area of a Venn diagram.



Live! Career Exploration

If you are experiencing career-related conflicts with your children, the most important thing is to recognize that the choices that they make today are not permanent - and that they are likely to have multiple jobs in their lifetime as the world keeps changing. Joyce Guera is a Filipino who lives in Korea and has multiple jobs. Joyce is a marketer and has also appeared in more than 50 Korean dramas. So, try to reduce parent-child conflicts and find more diverse career paths by helping your children develop interests and strengths in various ways like Joyce has.



See interview of Joyce Guera ▶

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The Rainbow Youth Center under the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family provides career guidance to adolescents of multicultural families through Rainbow School, an educational support project. Rainbow Schools are located nationwide and approximately 1,100 students participate every year. Let us take a look at the Rainbow Schools in your area and see what programs they offer.

※ Rainbow Youth Center (rainbowyouth.or.kr) > Foundation Projects
> Educational Support, Notifications > Notice > Article No. 1208: Current status of Rainbow School consignment institutions in 2021



Region	Name of Institution Operating Rainbow School	Contact
Seoul	Geumcheon-gu	Geumcheon Nuri Social Welfare Center
	Guro-gu	Hwawon Social Welfare Center
	Yeongdeungpo	Migrants Center Friend
Gyeonggi	Goyang	Immigrant Integration Center
	Hwaseong	Onnuri Multicultural Lifelong Education Center
	Pyeongtaek	Pyeongtaek University Multicultural Family Center
	Damoi	Damoi Hansarang Welfare
	Bucheon	Bucheon Saenal School
	Gwangju	Konjam Foreigner Education Support Center
Incheon	Suwon	Kyonggi University Industry-Academic Cooperation Foundation Kyonggi University Multicultural Education Center
	Yeosu-gu	Dasarang Foreigner Cultural Center
	Namdong-gu	Multicultural Family Support Center
Gwangju	Buk-gu	Gwangju Buk-gu Healthy Family Multicultural Family Support Center
Busan	Geumjeong-gu	Busan Global Cham School
Sejong	Jochiwon-eup	Sejong City Migrant Workers Welfare Center
Gangwon	Wonju	With Community
Gyeongnam	Gimhae	Global Dream Multicultural Research Institute
Gyeongbuk	Gyeongju	Hi-Neighbors Immigrants Center
Jeju	Jeju-si	Jeju Migrant Peace Community
Chungnam	Hongseong	Hongseong Migrants Human Rights Center
	Asan	237 Immigrants Support Center
Chungbuk	Chungju	Chungju Health Family Multicultural Family Support Center



Resolving Career-Related Conflicts of Multicultural Families through Communication and Counseling



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Counseling to increase your child's self-efficacy

Adolescents from multicultural families often face confusion about their identity. For these adolescents, continuous career counseling can help them realize that their bicultural identity can actually be advantageous in the global era, and that it can even help them broaden their horizons. Parents can understand their child's characteristics through conversations to provide support and guidance for their career path, or seek expert advice at multicultural institutions.

Counseling case examples that show improved self-efficacy

"I'm not sure to which country I belong" | Kim ○○ / 16 years old

A student from multicultural family born in Korea (Father: Bangladeshi, Biological Mother: Korean / (After remarriage) Stepmother: Bangladeshi)



When I was young, my father divorced my mother, who is Korean. About 5 years ago, he married my stepmother, who is from Bangladesh. I'm Korean but since my whole family is Bangladeshi, I feel all alone at home.



You are Korean, but since your father is from Bangladesh, you're also Bangladeshi. I think it would be better if you didn't choose one culture or the other. It might be confusing right now, living with the cultures of both countries can be a huge advantage.



Is that so? I'm not sure.



I'm jealous of you because you can call both countries "home." With all the globalization and internationalization, having diverse cultural backgrounds can actually be a great advantage for your future career. If you can speak Bangladeshi in addition to Korean, the advantage could be even greater.



I have never thought of it that way... I will try to encourage myself and think in a positive way about having a bicultural background.



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The Mentoring for Multicultural & Defector North Korean Students of the Korea Student Aid Foundation is a project through which college students act as mentors to help students from multicultural families adjust to school life through mentoring and career counseling. Applications open in March every year. You can check availability and eligibility at your local school, regional center, nearby participating universities, or foundations before applying. Let's take a look at how the program can help your children.

Korea Student Aid Foundation
(www.kosaf.go.kr/ko/main.do)

- > Talent development > Mentoring by College Students
- > KorMent Mentoring for Multicultural & Defector North Korean Students
- > KorMent Mentoring for Multicultural & Defector North Korean Students - Information for Parents



Source: Korea Research Institute for Vocational Education and Training (2016)
<Career Counseling (Guidance) Manual for Multicultural Students>

National Parent Support Center www.parents.go.kr



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National Institute for Lifelong Education





Exploring the Positive Self and Career Path of Multicultural Children

A survey of adolescents of multicultural families revealed that they need self-efficacy support the most. Self-efficacy can be positively changed through proper parental supports. In particular, engaging in a conversation using a role model can help increase self-efficacy related to career path.



One more step towards a career

Tips to increase your child's career self-efficacy

Career self-efficacy can be defined as young people's belief in their abilities to successfully perform career exploration, choice, and adjustment. To increase your child's sense of career self-efficacy, it is important for your child to experience accomplishing small achievements. Let your child set achievable goals on his/her own, such as reading a book about the field of career or occupation that interests him/her for an hour, and gives praise when he/she completes it. It is also a useful exercise to consider the good qualities of the role model, and what your children will have to work on to attain those qualities. Through the process, children can continue to make improvements and eventually be able to increase their chances of success.

Source: Korea Research Institute for Vocational Education and Training (2016)
<Career Counseling (Guidance) Manual for Multicultural Students> reorganized

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The Rainbow Youth Center under the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family provides psychological and emotional support as well as counseling and education for parents.

Rainbow Youth Center (rainbowyouth.or.kr)
> Foundation Projects > Educational Support



Career Video

Parents need to understand their child's abilities, characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses to be able to provide adequate support for his or her development. Please take the time to watch this video to learn more about how to nurture your child's self-esteem and self-efficacy.

Career Net (www.career.go.kr)
> Career Videos > [Middle School] Self-Esteem and Self-Efficacy



"I CAN DO IT"

Have positive conversations with your children using their role model

Talk with your children using their role model as an example

1. Find a role model with an occupation that your child is interested in.
2. Write down some of the challenges the role model might have been faced with.
3. Write down motivational words that helped the role model overcome difficulties.
4. Refer to the role model's case and apply his or her experiences to your children by repeating similar motivational phrases.
e.g.) "You are special. You will be able to get through this."

Name of the role model	
Challenges	
How he/she overcame them	
What your child is struggling with	
What you want to say to your child	

Source: Korea Research Institute for Vocational Education and Training (2016)
<Group Career Guidance Program for Psychological Support of Three Groups>



Parents and Children of Multicultural Families Grow Together by Understanding Each Other

Parent-child conflicts in multicultural families are often caused by a combination of factors, such as adolescence and multiculturalism. During such times, parents need to manage their own anxieties and encourage their children to be proud of their bicultural identity. These are some of the specialized agencies that offer counseling for multicultural families and provide information about career paths, school admission, as well as healthy ways of resolving conflicts between parents and children.



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The potential of children of multicultural families to lead the age of globalization

In this era of globalization, children from multicultural families have endless possibilities, growing up with two languages and cultures. These children will have cultural and linguistic diversity which is one of the core competencies highly sought after in the field of interpretation/translation, diplomacy, and tourism. Continued encouragement, interest, and support from their parents will help the children to not only discover their strengths but also enjoy the process of career exploration.

Reference: Career Net (www.career.go.kr) > Career Path Videos > Self-Esteem and Self-Efficacy



Career Path Recipe

Active parenting is important in establishing identity of children of multicultural families

When parents of multicultural families are anxious about the fact that they do not fully understand the characteristics and problems of their children, they press their children harder or try to discipline them more strictly. In the process, parents' anxiety is passed on to their children, and the children could even cut off communication with their parents, thinking that their feelings are not being understood.

Most conflicts start small. So it is important for parents to constantly consider the child's point of view and seek to actively resolve the problems rather than avoiding them. For example, a parent from Russia thought that if her children knew and understood Russian culture and customs better, conflicts between the parent and children would reduce and the relationships would improve. The parent therefore suggested that the family experience traditional Russian culture together, and on December 31st every year, the whole family spends the last day of the year wearing traditional Russian costumes, dancing and singing. As a result, the children naturally embraced Russian culture, felt proud of their parent, and ultimately were able to form a sense of identity and establish a good parent-child relationship.

Reference: YouTube (www.youtube.com)
Career Path Recipe for Parents > Dahaeng TV Part 1



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Conflicts in multicultural families – Worry no more and get help!

You can receive professional counseling for the problems specific to multicultural families.



Central Multicultural Education Center

(www.edu4mc.or.kr / 02-3780-9783~6)

The Center provides support for customized education for children of multicultural families and lays the foundation for education revitalization.



Multicultural Family Support Center Danuri

(www.liveinkorea.kr / 1577-1366)

The Center provides assistance to parents of multicultural families settling down in Korea and offers customized services according to stage in life cycle.



Healthy Family Support Center (www.familynet.or.kr / 1577-9337)

The Center provides an integrated service that combines counseling, education, and cultural programs to support various families.



Rainbow Youth Center

(www.rainbowyouth.or.kr / 02-733-7587)

The Center provides assistance to youths from immigrant and multicultural families.



Multicultural Family Support Centers in each city/county/district

The Centers provide comprehensive services to support the stable settling and integration of multicultural families.



National Parent Support Center www.parents.go.kr



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Step-by-Step Resolution for Conflicts in Multicultural Families

Conflicts between parents and children of multicultural families may hinder development of children's academic ability, self-efficacy, and career path. Let's learn how to communicate with your children to better understand each other and resolve conflicts.

Using a six-step conflict resolution technique in a conversation

Let's explore the "Six-Step Conflict Resolution Model," which recommends having in-depth communications to find practical solutions for both parents and children. The Model also includes evaluation of progress and implementation. Applying the techniques to real life situations can resolve conflicts between parents and children of multicultural families.

Conflict-Resolution Step	Parents	Children
Preparation Identify the issue and check if there is enough time to resolve the problem.	e.g.) It's frustrating because I don't know what my child's career concerns or aspirations are.	e.g.) I can't talk to my parents about my career concerns because they don't speak Korean.
STEP 1. Share your thoughts Talk about your own hopes and concerns and listen carefully to each other.	e.g.) Even though I may not fully understand what my child is saying, I still would like to talk.	e.g.) I wish my parents spoke better Korean.
STEP 2. Suggest possible solutions Parents should freely make suggestions and encourage children to do the same.	e.g.) I want my child to speak slowly, using easy vocabulary, when he/she shares career concerns.	e.g.) I want my parents to study Korean and think from my point of view first.
STEP 3. Evaluate solutions Parents and children agree on workable or acceptable solutions.	e.g.) I agree with the need for studying Korean. As for thinking from the child's point of view first, I think I need to take time and practice.	e.g.) I will speak to parents with simple words. I am a little afraid that if I share my career concerns with my parents, it will lead to a greater conflict due to differences of opinion.
STEP 4. Draw a solution Come to a mutual decision on and clear understanding of an acceptable solution.	e.g.) I always thought that I should study Korean. So, I will start studying Korean. I will also practice thinking from my child's perspective.	e.g.) I didn't say anything because I thought they wouldn't understand anyway. I will try to speak in simple words. When it comes to sharing career concerns, I will start with small things that I feel comfortable sharing and practice over time.
STEP 5. Accept the solution Decide who, when, and what to do when conflict arises.	e.g.) When we get into an argument, I will take time to listen to what my child has to say first.	e.g.) When my parents don't understand what I'm saying, I will try not to get frustrated and write my thoughts in a letter.
STEP 6. Evaluate the progress and implementation Evaluate how well the conflict was resolved and how the process was.	e.g.) By having a peace of mind when speaking in Korean, I could make so much improvement.	e.g.) Writing a letter to my parents helped express my thoughts clearly.

Source: ParentsOnNuri>eLibrary>Center Publication>Educational Materials> <Parents-Children: Embracing Each Other Through Communication>

