DREAM BIG
Do you look at your teacher and think you might want to have that job when you are bigger, or have you passed the fire station and thought about helping others as a firefighter? What about a photographer, writer or a business owner? If you haven’t thought about a specific career, are there subjects in school that you are really good at or are really exciting to you? Talking about your abilities, talents and interests with teachers, family and friends might give you an idea of what kind of job you would like to do when you are older.

Have you ever gone to work with a grown-up to see what they do at their job? This is a great way to really know what a job is like and if it is something you might want to do. Sometimes on TV, they will show you a person doing a job, but what you see on TV may not be what that job is like in real life.

So what is your job right now? That’s right, a student. And the most important parts of your job as a student are to learn, ask questions and explore. The best thing you can do to be prepared for any job or career opportunity when you grow up is to work hard in school. What you do in school now can really help you be whatever you want to be as you get older.

Do you have a DREAM of what you want to be when you grow up?
In the next few pages, you will see examples of different jobs or career options in the Health Care field. If you are someone that really likes to learn about how things work in the body and if you like to help other people, then one of these jobs might be a great fit for you.

This is not an exhaustive list of health careers; other career options include:

- Biomedical Engineer
- Chiropractor
- Counselor
- Dental Hygienist and Dental Assistant
- Imaging Sciences
- Occupational Therapist
- Ophthalmologist and Optometrist
- Prosthetist
- Research Scientist
- Social Workers
- Veterinarian

The children featured in this publication are children of faculty, staff and students of the University of Kentucky Health Care Colleges. Photos by Christine Harper and Gina Ikner, University of Kentucky College of Dentistry.
A doctor is someone that tries to make you feel better when you are sick and also checks you each year to make sure you are staying healthy and strong. When you go to the doctor they look in your ears and throat and they listen to your chest to make sure everything is working the way it should. Sometimes, when you are sick, a doctor may give you medicine to help make you feel better. Doctors can also specialize in different parts of the body like the heart, knees and brain. Science classes are very important, so be sure to pay attention in school and work hard so that you are prepared when it is time to start medical school.
Dentist

A dentist is someone who looks at your teeth, gums and mouth to make sure they are healthy and work properly. When you visit the dentist’s office they may take x-rays of your teeth to make sure they don’t have any cavities and that they are growing strong. Dentists teach people to take care of their teeth by brushing properly, flossing and teaching healthy habits for eating and drinking. They also help people that have pain in their mouth, gums or teeth and can also move, take out or make new teeth for their patients. There are also many different kinds of dentists that focus on different groups of people or fixing certain types of problems in the mouth. If you want to be a dentist you can start by talking to your dentist at your next visit and asking them questions about what they do. If you like to work with your hands and help other people, being a dentist might be a good choice for you in the future.
A nurse is someone who helps people of all ages. They give care and treatment to sick people by giving medicine, changing dressings and teaching them how to care for themselves. Helping patients and families who are sad or upset is also part of their job. Nurses help “well people” keep from getting sick by teaching healthy ways to live and giving shots to prevent illness. They work in hospitals, clinics, doctor’s offices and nurse practitioners even see patients in their own office. All nurses love taking care of others and helping them stay well.
Physician Assistant

A physician assistant is someone who works with a doctor in the hospital and the doctor’s office. If you are sick and need to go to the doctor’s office, you may see a physician assistant. Physician assistants can examine you by listening to your chest to see if your heart is healthy and that you are breathing fine. They can also order tests and x-rays, help doctors during surgery, educate patients and their families, and give you medicine to help make you feel better. Physician assistants work anywhere that a doctor can work. Physician assistants study a lot of science when they are in school and like working with other people. Be sure to study hard and pay attention in school now, so that you are prepared to start learning to be a physician assistant.
Pharmacist

When you get sick, you probably take medicine to help you get well. Do you know why that medicine works or how it was made? **Well, pharmacists are the medicine experts!** They use science to find out what medicines can help you, when you should take your medicine, how much you need, and tell you what can happen if you don’t take them the right way. Pharmacists also make new medicines for people who need them. They even use different colors, shapes, and flavors to make medicines look and taste better. Pharmacists work closely with all types of people, from little children to grandparents. Some pharmacists even make medicines for animals. Pharmacists work in hospitals, in some of the stores where you shop, and in many other places where people need medicine. If you like science, math, and helping people to get well, then you might enjoy being a pharmacist.
Physical Therapist

If you hurt yourself, a physical therapist can help you get better faster. When a person gets injured, or they have had surgery, they will go to a physical therapist to get back movements or strength in their body that they lost because of the injury or surgery. They can show you special exercises that can help make your muscles and bones strong again, so you can do your normal activities or play sports without making the injury worse. The physical therapist can also help relieve the pain that sometimes comes with an injury. If you enjoy being active, and you like learning how the muscles and nerves in your body work together to allow you to move, balance and stay healthy, you might like to be a physical therapist.
Clinical Nutritionist

A nutritionist is someone who can tell you what food is good for you. Eating food that is not good for your body can lead to health problems. A nutritionist can tell you what foods you should eat every day to help you continue to grow and stay strong. Sometimes they may suggest eating certain kinds of food or not eating other foods in order to help with improving your health. Nutritionists spend a lot of their time speaking with many different types of patients and can work in many different places like schools, health departments, clinics, doctor’s offices, and hospitals. Nutritionists can determine your nutritional status and then help you recover from disease conditions or help you prevent disease by eating healthy. Nutritionists study many different types of science such as chemistry, physiology and biology.
Athletic Trainer

Athletic trainers spend a lot of time researching and studying how the body works in order to teach athletes how to prevent injuries. Athletic trainers also help athletes who are hurt by treating their injury and then giving them exercises so that their body heals the way it should. A big part of being an athletic trainer is teaching patients how to take care of their body to prevent injury, so being a good communicator is very important. Athletic trainers work in all sorts of places from schools and clinics to sports stadiums. Some athletic trainers are able to work with professional sports teams. You can start preparing to be an athletic trainer now by focusing on your science courses and reading as many books as you can. The more you read the easier it will become. Next time you watch a game on TV or go to a sporting event with your family, look to see if you can find the athletic trainers on the sidelines.
Speech and Language Pathologists and Audiologists

Speech and language pathologists work with patients who have trouble speaking and understanding others speak. They also work with patients to teach them how to use the muscles in their face and mouth to help them learn to swallow and control their expressions. Many times, speech and language pathologists also work with patients who have hearing problems in order to help them learn how to talk. Speech and language pathologists work with many different types of people and their families and can work in places like schools and hospitals. If you want to be a speech and language pathologist you need to be sure to pay attention in your science classes since you will need to study a lot of science in school later on.

Audiologists work with patients who have trouble hearing. They specialize in testing, diagnosing and treating hearing loss and balance problems in adults and children. An audiologist may work in a hospital, with a physician, in a private practice or in a school. If you want to be an audiologist you should study math and science. But audiologists also have to be good communicators, so being able to listen to people describe their problems is a good skill too!
A medical laboratory scientist is someone who works in a hospital laboratory performing experiments or tests on blood samples to help doctors determine what is making a patient sick. When you have your blood drawn, medical laboratory scientists are the ones performing experiments on your blood. Medical laboratory scientists, also known as laboratory detectives, help patients by carefully performing laboratory tests and quickly reporting the results to nurses and doctors. The results of these experiments help doctors to know why their patient is feeling bad and what medicines will make them better. Medical laboratory scientists work in different lab areas studying blood cells such as red blood cells, germs, and viruses. It will be important to pay attention in your chemistry and biology classes since medical laboratory scientists perform laboratory experiments every day for a living.
If you are interested in working with people and improving the health of others, you might consider going into public health. There are many jobs for people in public health ranging from providing care, education, researching and promoting healthy behaviors in the community. Public health professionals can serve at the local, state, national and international level to promote healthy behaviors and educate about different dangers that may impact a person’s health and wellbeing.
Clinical Leadership and Management

Clinical leaders and managers are the people who supervise the clinics and hospitals where healthcare providers work. While you may not see a clinic leader or manager, they work very hard every day to manage the healthcare services to make sure there are enough doctors, nurses, therapists and other personnel to help care for patients. While these people do not treat patients, they work in clinics, hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities and other places to hire the healthcare workers, manage the budget, and improve the quality of healthcare services needed for all patients. If you are interested in working in healthcare and helping others, this is a great career choice for you. Make sure that you focus on science, math and communication courses now so that you are ready for college to study about becoming a clinical healthcare manager.
THINK
Make school a priority by going to class, paying attention and doing your homework.

READ
Read as much as you possibly can, it increases your knowledge and your vocabulary.

LEARN
Learn how you study best and practice good study habits by finding a quiet space where you can focus on your work. If you are having problems with a class, be sure to ask for help from your family and teachers.

PLAY
Remember that balance is important to staying healthy. If you work hard in school during the day, it will allow you time to get exercise/play and spend time with family and friends in the evenings and weekend.

JOIN
Get involved in activities outside of school, music, art and sports. You will meet new people, learn new things and you may find something that you love to do.

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