

Transitioning from Student to Professional

General strategies:

- Visit work sites of interest and talk with people in the field you are exploring; conduct informational interviews; complete a career mapping exercise.
- Seek out research experiences.
- Gain internship and/or volunteer experience working with the populations of interest and with programs serving families, individuals, and children.
- Become a member of professional organizations and participate in their activities.
 - Participate in Minnesota Council on Family Relations (MCFR) student/new professional events.*
- Attend conferences and workshops.*
- Network, network, network! Take advantage of opportunities for you to meet professionals in the family field.*
- Seek out mentors (upper level/graduate students, professionals, faculty members) who can help guide you in this process.*
- Work on public speaking and presentation skills; develop written communication skills.*
- Accept leadership role in clubs, organizations, or religious settings.*
- Build your CV and/or résumé and keep it up-to-date.*
- Keep a portfolio of your best academic work & class syllabi.
- Get to know people from cultures different than your own.
- Don't discount any of your experiences – look for the ways in which these experiences helped you understand and work more effectively with people, or that they sensitized you to important family issues.
- Pay attention to the news, policies, program initiatives, and public opinion. Develop your own informed opinions about issues affecting families and children.
- Think of the end goal and identify small steps you will need to take to get there.
- Visit your academic advisor often to discuss your career plans and preparation.
- Travel abroad to gain first hand exposure to other cultures; learn a second language.
- Consider adding a minor to expand your range of marketable skills.
- Search for information about individual occupations, including the nature of the work and the earnings potential on the website of the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics at www.bls.gov/oco/oco1002.htm.

* Indicate strategies that MCFR membership contributes to

Adapted by Alisha Hardman (MCFR) from the University of Maryland, Department of Family Studies "Careers in Family Studies: What can I do with this degree?" handout.