



Connect with Kids

WebSource

For the Classroom

Beyond Graduation: A Chance for a New Life

Video Overview

Saul Avina experienced a wonderful childhood in Mexico until his parents divorced when he was 9. After the divorce, his mother moved to America, and Saul was recruited by Mexican gang members who promised to be his new family. He started off selling marijuana to other kids his age, and his experiences exposed him to fighting and other forms of violence. Saul's turning point came after he witnessed his first and last drive-by shooting. It was then that he decided the money and the sense of family weren't worth the fear and anxiety that he was feeling. His father allowed him to go live with his mother in America

Ironically, Saul was tested again when American gang members approached him and asked him to join their group. This time he had the strength to say no and to resist the temptation. He took a job as a cook and earned his paycheck the hard way. The sense of pride that came with Saul's legitimate work was overwhelming, and he eventually found a job working with kids like himself, who come from Latino families and who have witnessed domestic violence. Saul talks to these kids about preventing violence at school, at home and in the community. His experience has taken him full circle, and what he calls a "chance for a new life."

Discussion and Self-Reflection Questions

- What caused Saul to seek a family outside of his own house? Have you ever looked outside of your family for elements that a family "should" fulfill? When and why did you do this?
- Saul describes his move to America as a "chance for a new life." In what ways did Saul's "new life" in America save him and provide him with a fresh start?
- What moves can you make in your life to provide new and better chances and opportunities?

Activity:

Want That Job? Improve Your Chances

Begin this activity by reminding students that in the video Saul Avina found a chance to chart a new existence by moving to America. For teens and young adults, no matter where they live, getting an education that will provide opportunities in today's job market is the best "chance for a new life."

Employers often require a specific level of education in order to even interview a job applicant. Review with students the **Educational Requirements for Employment** hand out. Examples of education level listed in job postings often include:

- Must have GED or high school diploma.
- High school diploma or equivalent required.

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- Bachelor's degree required.
- Associate degree or equivalent (minimum of 34 credit hours and an additional one (1) year of relevant full-time experience).
- Master's degree and 3 years of experience or Ph.D. degree with no prior experience is acceptable.

Next, ask students to check out the jobs listing in the **New York Times**. (Link: <http://jobmarket.nytimes.com/pages/jobs/index.html>) or another local newspaper. The assignment is for each student to find a job opening that seems interesting or appealing. Either in writing or in a presentation to the class, each student should be ready to describe the job, what about it sounds interesting and what level of education is required.

Educational Requirements for Employment

High school diploma or equivalent: the completion of high school or the equivalent, resulting in the award of a high school diploma or the equivalent, such as the [General Education Development](#) (GED).

Some college, no degree: is a high school diploma or the equivalent, plus the completion of one or more postsecondary courses that did not result in any degree or award.

Associate's degree: a degree awarded usually for at least 2 years of full-time academic study beyond high school, typically at the community college level.

Bachelor's degree: a degree awarded usually for at least 4 years of full-time academic study beyond high school.

Postsecondary non-degree award: usually a certificate or other award that is not a degree. Certifications issued by professional organizations or certifying organizations are not included in this category. These certification programs may last only a few weeks to 2 years. Examples include health aides, paramedics, EMTs and hairstylists.

Master's degree: degree awarded usually for 1 or 2 years of full-time academic study beyond a bachelor's degree.

Doctoral or professional degree: degree awarded usually for at least 3 years of full-time academic work beyond a bachelor's degree. Examples include lawyers (JD), physicians (MD) and surgeons, scientists (PhD), and dentists.

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Bachelor's degree required.

Associate degree or equivalent (minimum of 34 credit hours and an additional one (1) year of relevant full-time experience).

Master's degree and 3 years of experience or Ph.D. degree with no prior experience is acceptable.

Related College Board Advisory Guide Resources

<https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/CollegePlanning/media/pdf/CBSchools-Advisory-Guide-Grade-9.pdf>

Graduation Roadmap: Tracking Progress Toward a Diploma, Page 131

This activity provides discussion questions and charts to help students track and reflect upon their progress toward graduation.