

# Parents, don't say what you don't mean

Business



“ You can be anything you want to be in life. “ We will support you no matter what you decide to do.

” “ Oh, you shouldn’t study that in college, you’ll never get a job doing it.”

Two comments like these put together seem to be made by parents far too frequently. As rising seniors in high school, my classmates and I will soon begin filling out applications for college, which means we need to start seriously considering what we want to study if we haven’t thought about it already. This process can be extremely stressful for any student, so it’s natural for parents to offer support to their sons or daughters who are going through it. The problem with this, however, is that in doing so they can often say something they don’t actually mean. Parents telling their children that they can study whatever they want in college can be a positive thing if they can manage to honestly stand by these words.

Genuine support from these important figures in their lives can make students’ decisions regarding their future much easier. Unfortunately, this is not a situation in which students typically find themselves. In reality, many parents initially state that they will be accepting of any decision, but later discourage their sons or daughters from studying something once they show interest in a certain major. In other words, parents’ comments toward their children’s college plans usually go from “ you can do anything you want” to “ you can do anything you want..

. except that. Or that. Or that.” I’m very aware that the vast majority of parents don’t do this intentionally. I’m sure parents do mean their words at

the time when they claim they will support whatever their children want to do.

Nevertheless, when parents start to suggest that they want their children to stay away from studying a certain subject, they are showing that they mean the opposite of what they initially said. This is seriously detrimental to students who are trying to figure out what they want to do in life. Feeling like your parents may not be supportive of you is one of the worst emotions you can experience, so if their parents lead them to begin feeling this way, students tend to decide to choose college majors in which they are less interested. As a result, these students could eventually find themselves in a career with which they are not truly happy simply because it's something their parents wanted them to pursue. Parents need to be supportive of their children, but they also need to remember to be truthfully supportive.

They shouldn't claim that they will accept what their child wants to do " no matter what" if they'll end up going back on their word.