

**# 545 04/05/10 Discovering your child's hidden passion**

You spent a few weeks observing your child. Now it is time to study your notes and help your child find his or her passion. Sometimes a child's passion is not so obvious as a favorite sport or a hobby.

The fictional child we looked at last week did not appear to have a passion for anything. He likes video games and some computer activities. His dad had failed to "hook" him on writing programs for video games, even though that seemed a natural fit for someone who likes computers and games. When playing video games, he wants to play against someone or have someone watch him play solo.

He is good at several sports, but is not interested enough to go outside and shoot baskets alone. He enjoys sports with his neighborhood friends or on organized teams. With his friends, he is a leader if a leader is needed. However, he is willing to step aside and allow someone to fill the leadership role. In fact, he is a great encourager to teammates and friends.

This young man is very verbal. He loves to talk and loves to argue. He is a good reader and reads for fun when he finds a book or magazine that interests him.

"But," his parents ask, "Where is his passion? We want to see him 'on fire' about something."

I think the parents have missed the obvious. He has a passion for social interactions. Games (video or board), computers and sports are vehicles by which he engages his friends and teammates in social activities. He is even willing to sacrifice the leadership role in order to keep the social play going. This young man knows how to encourage a friend when he sees the need.

Is there a future career for him that will fulfill his passion? Absolutely. He will need to get a solid education in all subjects, but should be encouraged to participate in debate, organized sports and volunteer activities. Throughout his schooling, his parents should talk to him about his social aptitudes and what careers require those abilities. There will be unlimited choices. In the meantime, he should be encouraged to continue to develop his social skills as well as his academic foundations.

Next week, we will look at one more child as an example of a "hidden" passion.