



COLLEGE READINESS TIPS FOR FAMILIES

ramp-up to
READINESS[™]

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ACADEMIC

Read, read, read

From day one, point out words, and read 20+ minutes a day reading with your child, and get a library card.

Send your child to school each day, every day whenever possible. It matters greatly.

Establish time for homework Keep TV, phones, and other devices away.

Stay connected with school Attend school conferences and stay in touch with teachers. Ask if your child's work indicates readiness for college in math, writing and reading.

Choose rigorous classes and enroll your child in at least one class that offers college credit such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, College in the Schools, or Project Lead the Way.

Align middle and high school courses with the academic requirements of the type of institution your child wants to attend.

Avoid the senior slump Encourage your 12th grade child to finish strong.

ADMISSIONS

Begin college planning early

Learn about different types of colleges in your area by attending sports or arts events, or simply walk across campus.

Have your child take the ACT or SAT test at the end of the junior year, or early senior year.

Talk to your child about what the type of postsecondary setting they want to attend – i.e., rural, urban, suburban, region, religious, public, private.

Research colleges of interest to learn about location, cost, entrance requirements, graduation rates, and more.

Encourage your child to think broadly about postsecondary schools as opposed to choosing a college based on its name and reputation.

Help your child create an organizational system for keeping track of all communications related to college applications.

Submit applications in fall of your child's senior year.

CAREER

Talk to your child about a wide array of careers, beyond the ones noticeable on a daily basis.

Discuss careers of interest and use career search tools to research jobs that are in demand and growing. Help your child learn the degree, certificate, and skill prerequisites for careers your child might like to do, and compensation for varied jobs.

Ask your child: What do you want to be doing five years from now? Ten years from now?

Visit college campuses and college fairs with your child.

Encourage your child to seek internships to learn about careers from those already doing them.

Talk with a school counselor or teacher about the classes and college education needed to prepare for careers of interest. Also ask about **career interest inventories** that can help your child find careers that match interests and talents.

FINANCIAL

Beginning early on, use a financial aid checklist to plan how to pay for college.

Discuss benefits of postsecondary attainment with your child, including connections to income, unemployment, and quality of life.

Start saving early and see collegesavings.org/ for savings plan ideas, or your state's 529 Plan site.

Help your child prepare a budget for college. Determine how much for housing, food, supplies, and entertainment during college.

Complete a free FAFSA Estimator to get an estimate of college costs. Most students receive some form of financial aid.

Create a plan to cover the cost of one term at a postsecondary institution.

Complete a FAFSA in October of your child's senior year.

Attend college fairs and financial aid workshops with your child.

Help research college scholarships.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL

Establish a growth mindset by helping your child understand that intelligence is not fixed and that with effort and support they can improve even in subjects that don't come easily.

Praise your child's effort and persistence, especially when facing challenges.

Help your child set goals regarding behavior, time management and academic work.

Tell your children how much you value education and show your pride in their achievements.

Encourage your child to seek help when needed from peers and teachers, and to form study groups.

Reinforce social and emotional skills that help children grow to be self-aware, caring, responsible, and engaged learners and citizens.

Model lifelong learning so that your child will be able to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

Help your child manage stress and anxiety about school and college.