

**Helping Your Child
Prepare for
College and Career**

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Workshop Goals

- What is Transition?
- What is Advocacy?
- Why is college important?
- What parent practices have the greatest impact on student achievement?
- How can you help your child prepare for college and career?

Imagine you are starting a new job...

- What will your responsibilities be?
- How will this new job differ from your previous job?
- Do you know what is expected of you?
- What are this companies policies?
- Do you have fears/anxieties?
- Are you prepared?

Now imagine you're 11 or 12
or 13 or 14

Get the idea?

Stresses our teenagers face:

- Puberty - physical, emotional, and mental changes
- Peer Pressure
- Self Esteem
- Sexual attractions
- Appearance: Clothing/Style/Looks
- Social Cliques (fitting in with peers)
- New responsibilities at school and home
- More Classes and Teachers
- Curriculum
- Grades

Additional high school stresses:

Challenge – Ninth grade is a pivotal year for dropping out

- Students want more independence
- School work is getting increasingly complex
- Students are not necessarily bringing communications home
- Communications to parents are sometimes hard to understand and not happening until there is a problem

What can you do to help?

- Spend time and talk with your child about their school day.
- Talk about your family's values, along with sex, drugs, smoking, alcohol, and other stressors.
- Listen to what they have to say with an open mind and respect their opinions.
- Foster their independence.
- Become involved in the middle school and high school, know your child's teachers and other key staff.

Become an advocate for your child: Advocacy is Protective

The more families can be advocates for children and support their progress, the better their children do, and the longer they stay, in school.



What are Advocates?

1. Know how system works
2. Work with school staff to plan for children's future
3. Guide children through the system
4. Know where to get help
5. Speak out for other parents



Why college is important

- College graduates have access to more jobs
- Young people with college degrees are more likely to get a job with such benefits as health insurance, a retirement fund, paid vacations, and disability insurance
- College grads on average earn far more annually – over a lifetime, the difference in salary between a high school graduate and a college graduate amounts to nearly \$1 million

Parent Impact: Middle-High School

Greatest impact on student achievement:

- High expectations for student success
- Discussing plans for future education
- Helping students prepare for college
- Monitoring progress
- Knowledge of courses and classes

(Catsambis, 1998; Ho and Willms, 1996)

Out of School Time Counts

- Students spent 70% of their waking hours OUTSIDE school.
- How they spend that time -- and with whom -- has a big impact on how they do IN school
- Out of school time is directed by parents

(Reginald Clark, 2002)

At the middle school level

It is especially important for parents to do the following:

- Discuss school activities,
- Monitor out-of-school activities,
- Contact school staff, and
- Volunteer and attend parent-teacher conferences and other school events.

Ho and Willms (1996)

At the high school level

It is especially important for parents to do the following:

- Guide their students toward postsecondary education,
- Make sure they read and do their homework, and
- Stress the value of education.

(Catsambis, 1998; Fan and Chen 1999; Shumow and Lomax, 2002)

Content Area: Common courses for college admission and success

- English (4) = Four years of English
- Math (4) = Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2, and high-level math in 12th grade
- Science (3) = At least three years with labs (typical courses include Biology, Chemistry, Physics)
- Social Studies (3) = Typical courses include World History, American History, Civics, Economics
- World Language (2) = At least two years of a second language in sequence (i.e., Spanish 1, Spanish 2)

Helping your child prepare for college and career

Set clear expectations

- Talk to your children. Let your child know you expect him or her to go to college—nothing less.
- Monitor your child's homework. If you can, read class assigned books along with your child (check them out from the library).
- Know your child's teachers and find out their qualifications and experience.
- Know what is expected of your child in each class and whether your child is meeting these expectations.

Preparing for college and career

- Make sure your children are in the most challenging classes that will prepare them to succeed in college and work.
- Ask for a syllabus or outline of the work your child will receive during the year.
- Ask for or acquire on your own a copy of the state academic standards for each subject, use them to make sure you know what your child is expected to learn in school.

http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/state_academic_standards/19721

The Parents' Guide to Student Success

- Developed in response to the Common Core State Standards in English language arts and mathematics that more than 40 states have adopted.
- Created by teachers, parents, education experts, and others from across the country, the standards provide clear, consistent expectations for what students should be learning at each grade in order to be prepared for college and career.
- National PTA created the guides for grades K-8 and two for grades 9-12 (one for English language arts/literacy and one for mathematics).

The Parents' Guide to Student Success

The *Guide* includes:

- Key items that children should be learning in English language arts and mathematics in each grade, once the standards are fully implemented.
- Activities that parents can do at home to support their child's learning.
- Methods for helping parents build stronger relationships with their child's teacher.
- Tips for planning for college and career (high school only).

<http://www.pta.org/4446.htm>

Be an effective advocate for your child:

Be an advocate at school

- Meet with your child's teachers and counselor
- Make sure you know what your child should be learning
- If your child struggles in a specific subject, ask the teacher or principal about a plan to help your child learn.

Be an advocate at home

- Find out the high school course requirements for colleges
- Learn all you can about college financial aid
- Find out which colleges offer your child the best chances of success Visit College Results Online, www.collegeresults.org

Stay Involved

Be an advocate at school

- Check with the principal to find out whether your child's teachers are certified
- Ask the principal for data

Be an advocate at home

- Find outside help to navigate the college admissions process.

You Can Make a Difference for Your Child

Work with other parents to help your child's school

- Talk to other parents.
- Work towards getting all students placed in high-level classes.
- Work towards making sure all teachers are highly qualified.
- Understand how well your schools are performing with all subgroups of students.
- Is the school district doing enough to help your schools improve achievement?

Resources

- **March 2 Success** is an online, self-paced course designed to improve performance on standardized tests while enhancing math, science and English skills. This site is for everyone over the age of 13. Developed by the U.S. Army
<https://www.march2success.com/index.cfm>
- Parent Materials/Downloadable Brochures, PA Career Education & Work Standards: PA Department of Education
<http://www.pacareerstandards.com/parent-guardian-resources.php>
- *Your Student is Ready for College. Are You? Helping Your Teen Find the Right Fit:* PA PTA & Lehigh Carbon Community College
http://www.papta.org/cms/lib6/PA07000425/Centricity/Domain/66/Brochure_LCCC-PTA.pdf


