We want all kids to look forward sooner and be able to give back later.
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The following sources contributed to the making of the Guide for Success:

- **Department of Education**  

- **Indiana Youth Institute, Trip to College**  
  [http://www.tripstocollege.org](http://www.tripstocollege.org)

- **Bright Hub**  

- **Radford University**  

- **Grant Soliven, Financial Services Professional, West Point Financial Group**
Introduction to College Mentors

College Mentors for Kids connects college students with the most to give to kids who need it most. Our mentor program operates on college campuses across the country, serving over 2,500 kids and 2,500 mentors with an additional 300 chapter leaders. Each child in the program is matched one-on-one with a college student in a mentoring relationship that lasts the entire school year. Chapters provide transportation for the children to campus for weekly activities, twenty times throughout the academic year. These activities focus on the importance of higher education and career, culture and diversity, and community service. College Mentors for Kids activities also remind us that it is never too early to start thinking about and planning for college!

College Mentors Activities

Every week when your child comes to campus, he or she participates in a variety of activities focused on one of three topics: Higher Education & Career, Culture & Diversity, or Community Service.

In the next section you will learn more about what your child does during College Mentors activities. There are many activities that can be done based on each activity topic so the following are just examples of possible activities. Ask your child what he or she learned and participated in around each of the activity topics. There are also online resources listed under each topic that can help you encourage your child’s interests.

If you’re interested in learning more about specific activities your child participated in, ask his or her mentor or the chapter leaders for more information.

Another resource, Scholastic Teachers, provides lesson plans, articles, and activities for students to continue learning beyond the classroom. Scholastic Teachers is targeted towards educators, but parents and students can find educational resources and fun, interactive projects that will keep children excited about learning. Scholastic Teachers can be found at: http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/teaching-resources

College Mentors for Kids, Inc.
Higher Education and Career

**College Mentors Activity:** A typical activity focused on higher education and career may vary greatly based on the field of study. Examples may include a visit to the health center where children learn how to eat healthy, practice healthy habits, and avoid getting sick in college. During an activity focused on science, your child might listen to the chemistry club talk about dry ice and demonstrate how to make silly putty. The kids may then make silly putty with their mentor to take home. Another example could include financial literacy where the kids would do an activity regarding economics or marketing of an object to others. The kids may grow a better understanding of the business side of sales through a professor in the business school. In all variations of activities whether it be in science, agriculture, liberal arts, or more, there will be a focus on the career aspect and how it would relate to college or a technical school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career:</th>
<th>Education Required:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctor</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree, Medical School, Residency Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>Nursing Diploma/Associate’s Degree/Bachelor’s Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Pathologist/ Occupational Therapist/ Physical Therapist</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree, Master’s Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacist</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree, Pharm.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Caretaker</td>
<td>High School Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterinarian</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web/Graphic Designer</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountant/Sales/Marketing</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemist/Biologist</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree, Ph.D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

100% of Little Buddy’s knowledge of higher education and college life increased “a little” or “a lot” since they began working with them.
Tips for At-Home Child Development:

- Make healthy meals with your family avoiding foods high in fat and sugars.
- Encourage your child to be active and play outside with friends and family.
- Enforce a set bedtime/breakfast routine to help your child stay focused in class.
- Take your family to the natural science and history museum. Check for local free days or low-cost deals.
- Nature walks are great for observing animals and plants in their natural environment. Spend time taking advantage of the outdoors.
- Get involved with what your child is doing in science class and ask questions.
- At-home science experiments with your child can encourage their interest.
- Access the internet at your local library; check your local library for low-cost or free classes that teach computer skills.
- For internet safety tips, visit http://www.netsmartz.org/InternetSafety

Resources:

This section is supplied to help you guide and encourage your child’s interests. The list below provides kid-friendly resources related to the topic:

- http://www.choosemyplate.gov/
- www.kidshealth.org
- http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/
- http://www.sciencewithme.com/
- http://climatekids.nasa.gov
- http://www.knowitall.org/kidswork/

Culture and Diversity

“Thanks to College Mentors for Kids, now my daughter is setting goals for her future and is looking forward to college.” – Parent
College Mentors Activity: An activity focused on culture and diversity may include guest speakers from groups of international students. An example of an activity may be to visit the African American Cultural Center and learn about their background and heritage. Activities may also teach the importance of diversity through study abroad experiences or professors communicating about differences between countries. These activities will help your child learn more about the various countries and cultures that college students come from, as well as see how cultural awareness promotes learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career</th>
<th>Education Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Museum Curator</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree, Master’s Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performer, Singer, Musician, Artist</td>
<td>High School Diploma, although a Bachelor’s Degree is recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity Coordinator for Universities</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree, Master’s Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthropologist</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree, Master’s Degree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tips for At-Home Child Development:
- Take your family to an art museum, a new ethnic restaurant, a music show, a concert, or a theater to engage their creative sides.
- Check out your local college campus for low-cost, fun events open to public.
- Check your local community centers, library, and museum for art, theater, and music camps and classes.

Resources:
This section is supplied to help you guide and encourage your child’s interests. The list below provides kid-friendly resources related to the topic:
- [www.artprojectsforkids.org](http://www.artprojectsforkids.org)
helping with a canned-food drive. It could also include making holiday cards for a local senior living facility. An activity may also be learning about service clubs on campus such as Habitat for Humanity and building structures from Popsicle sticks to symbolize this type of service.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career</th>
<th>Education Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Director</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Admissions Counselor</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-profit Management</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Leader</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree, Master of Divinity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp Counselor</td>
<td>Associate’s Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychiatrist/Therapist/Counselor</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree, Medical School, Residency Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance Counselor</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree, Master’s Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Worker</td>
<td>Associate’s Degree, Bachelor’s Degree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tips for At-Home Child Development:
- Get your family involved in volunteering and community service. Many service opportunities are available in your community.
- Even small random acts of kindness can make a difference.
- Emphasize to your child the importance of helping others.
- Encourage your child to join extracurricular school service clubs and participate in school-wide drives.
- Getting involved can be as simple as helping a neighbor, being active in school or your community centers, or supporting your local religious institution.

Resources:
This section is supplied to help you guide and encourage your child’s interests. The list below provides kid-friendly resources related to the topic:

**Book of the Week**

**College Mentors Activity:** Literature is engaged at the beginning and end of every College Mentors activity. As soon as the kids arrive, they enjoy the book of the week, which may be related to the activity for the day, or they continue reading a chapter book with their Buddy Family or mentor. At the end of the activity, kids reflect about the day by writing and drawing in their journal, a keepsake they take home at the end of the year. Activities can also focus on reading; this may include a trip to the library to learn how college students use their campus resources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Careers</th>
<th>Education Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Librarian</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree, Master’s Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Writer</td>
<td>Bachelor's Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editor</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poet, Short Story Author, Novelist</td>
<td>High School Diploma, Bachelor’s Degree is recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Relations and Marketing Directors</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tips for At-Home Child Development:**
- Read out loud with your child for 20 minutes every day, especially during summer vacation. Children who are read to every day are more likely to develop the skills that they need to read on their own.
- Children who do not read during the summer months can slide back by two months, or lose roughly 22 percent of the reading skills previously learned.
- Encourage your child to read outside of school and to read out loud to others.
- **Use your local library!** The library is a great resource to help your child with reading and writing. Enroll your child in the summer reading program at your local library.
- Journal writing allows for creative expression. Remember to encourage writing stamina and fluency. Never discourage a child to write based on spelling.

**Resources:**
This section is supplied to help you guide and encourage your child’s interests. The list below provides kid-friendly resources related to the topic:
- [www.starfall.com](http://www.starfall.com)
Introduction to Higher Education

It is important for students and parents to start thinking about and planning for college as soon as possible. Be supportive of school and education while your child is in elementary, middle, and high school, and encourage your child to set goals for higher education. This planning and preparation can open doors to endless possibilities for your child.

What is Higher Education?
Higher education is defined as any education after high school graduation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public four-year college and universities</th>
<th>These are usually state-supported schools offering associate degrees, bachelor’s degrees, master’s degrees, and graduate degrees in many fields.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benefits of attending include: lower tuition rates, variety of degree programs, and school recognition.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples include: Indiana University, Ohio State University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Private four-year colleges and universities</th>
<th>These are funded by donors and alumni. They rely on fees, gifts, and tuition to raise money, which is why they tend to be more expensive.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benefits of attending include: smaller classes and more one-on-one attention.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples include: University of Notre Dame</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Two-year community colleges, junior colleges, technical and vocational schools</th>
<th>These offer certificates and associate degrees in specific career fields, as well as degrees that may transfer into bachelor’s degree programs. They also offer various programs in automotive services, skilled trades, and many other professions.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benefits of attending: more accessible and affordable, training for many different fields, and living at home.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples include: Ivy Tech Community College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

College Mentors for Kids, Inc.
Higher Education: The Facts

The Money
- A person with a four-year college degree earns approximately $20,000 more per year than a person who did not go to college.
- Someone with a two-year associate degree also tends to earn more than a high school graduate.
- On average, according to the Census Bureau, during an adults’ working lifetime a high school graduate earns $1.2 million while the average bachelor’s degree holder earns $2.1 million.

The Jobs
- An associate or bachelor’s degree is required for six of the ten occupations projected to grow the fastest between now and 2020.
- Nine of the ten fastest-growing occupations are health or computer information technology occupations, which often require education after high school.
- More and more jobs require education beyond high school. With some form of higher education, your child will have more jobs to choose from.
- There are many satisfying and well-paying jobs that are possible with certain technical or two-year degrees; you don’t have to get a four-year degree to see the benefits of college.
- Unemployment in 2014 (Bureau of Labor Statistics):
  - No high school diploma: 7.9%
  - High school diploma: 5.7%
  - Some college, or associate’s degree: 4.8%
  - Bachelor’s degree or higher: 3.1%
Prepare your Child for Academic Success

What can I do to help my child get ready for college?

There are many ways that higher education can help your child achieve. There are many things you can do to help your child do his or her best academically. Your child’s successes in school will better prepare him/her for higher education. It is never too soon to start planning for college! Here are some tips to help prepare your child:

- Talk about college and tell your child or children that you believe in them and that you are committed to helping them make their dream come true.
- Get involved. Visit the school, attend meetings, and talk with your child’s teachers and counselors. Teachers and counselors have valuable information about helping your child get to college, and it’s never too early to ask!
- You are the expert on your child. Share information with teachers. Let them know how your child learns best and if he or she has special needs.
- Ask your child about school. Review his/her report cards. Praise him/her when he/she does well, and if your child is having trouble, ask the teacher what you can do to help. Ask for help finding your child a mentor or tutor.
- Go to the library together. Give your child a quiet place to study and help him/her with homework. Schedule homework time every day after school to structure your child around his/her schoolwork.
- Save a little money regularly to show your child that you are planning for the future. Even pocket change helps build a college fund.
- Visit a college campus together, or attend a College Mentors activity with your child. Explore careers with your child. Ask your child’s mentor or a trusted college graduate to talk with your child about why college is important and how it changed his/her life.
- When your child is in middle school, talk to the school counselor to make sure he/she is taking classes to prepare for his/her diploma. These courses not only help students succeed when they reach college, but are sometimes required for certain financial aid programs.
- If your child is in high school, talk to the school counselor to make sure your child is taking classes he/she needs to graduate and pursue higher education. Don’t let your child choose the minimum graduation program.
  - Encourage your child to join extracurricular activities and to get involved in his/her community. This will help him/her learn more about careers and develop as a leader and member of the community.
School Counselors and Testing

You can find valuable resources to help set your child up for success in his/her school. Faculty and staff will be able to help connect you to various extracurricular programs, scholarships, and other services that will help prepare your child for high school graduation and higher education. School guidance counselors are excellent community resources. They are employed by schools to help parents and students take advantage of programs and services that will help students achieve. Here are some tips on how to work with the school’s guidance counselor and information about common standardized tests to take for higher education.

- Talk to your child’s guidance counselor because he/she is a valuable resource to help guide your child on the path to college. Your counselor will also be able to help connect you to scholarship opportunities.
- Make sure your child is on track to take the necessary tests in high school to qualify for college:
  - PSAT (Preliminary SAT)
    - The PSAT is a preliminary or practice test. It is encouraged that students take it before they take the SAT but it is not required.
  - SAT
  - ACT
- Talk to your child’s teacher and counselor to ensure that your child is on track to graduate and take the necessary tests to qualify for college.
- The school guidance counselor will know more about each of these tests and can help you apply for fee waivers to reduce or eliminate any testing fees.
Six Simple Steps to Saving for College

Higher education is becoming increasingly valuable but paying for college can be a challenge. It is never too soon to start preparing your child for college, and it is also never too soon to start saving for your child’s education after high school. There are many resources and methods that can help you pay for higher education.

Step 1:
- Understanding College Costs
  o Private colleges cost more to attend than public colleges
    ▪ Butler (Private) vs. Illinois State University (Public)
  o Public colleges cost more than community colleges
    ▪ Purdue University (Public) vs. Ivy Tech (Community)
  o Also keep in mind that some community colleges also provide education on certain trades, like the field of mechanics.

Step 2:
- Helping your child narrow in on a career path
  o Today a lot of unnecessary education costs come from students lacking a general idea about what they want to study. The more times your child changes majors, the more semesters it could potentially take to finish school.
  o Helping your child pinpoint his/her talents and interests can really make a difference in his/her choice of studies at a university.

Step 3:
- Splitting time between community college and a public university
  o When cost is a concern, some parents and students decide to first attend community college and then finish at a public or private university.
    ▪ If your child is interested in nursing, for example, he/she can contact a public school and see what classes are required to receive a degree in nursing. He/she could attend the local community college and take the basic classes for a much lower price and then finish schooling at a public university, receiving the degree from that university. This could potentially cut costs in half and your child would get an acclaimed education.

Step 4:
- Saving on your child’s behalf.
  o Putting away $10 a week for 10 years with an interest rate of 6% (sample rate: NOT reflective of the market) would put $5,216.00 in your child’s account for college. This way of saving could also give you a tax break.
  o Personal saving is not always easy, but if you could spare $10 a week over a period of time, you could help cut the costs for your child’s school.

“College Mentors for Kids taught me that there are many things to be when you grow up.”

College Mentors for Kids, Inc.
Step 5:
- **Apply for Federal Student Aid**
  - When your child is in high school, applying for FAFSA (**Free Application for Federal Student Aid**) is a great way to get free higher education money from the government (**up to $2700 a semester**) and also see what other money your child is eligible for in the future.
  - The applications can be complicated so make sure to involve your school’s guidance counselor. They are a valuable resource that can help guide you through the application process.
  - **Make sure to fill out your FAFSA on time and thoroughly.**
  - Student financial aid resources can come in the form of loans as well.
    - These are not bad loans.
    - They could be the extra boost to help cover the costs of your child’s education, have very low interest rates, are different from credit cards or private loans, and are backed by the government.

Step 6:
- **Scholarships**
  - In 2007-2008 the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study found that 2.91 billion dollars were awarded to students in the form of scholarships
    - The **average student received $2,523.21 of scholarship aid per year**
  - Scholarships are often called “Easy Money” because you only need to be able to write and have good grades.
  - Setting up times, much like you might for homework, for your child to fill out scholarship applications could VASTLY increase the money they receive for college.
  - Community involvement is crucial to scholarships, so keeping your child involved in activities outside of school at church, in clubs, or in sports also greatly increases their chances of receiving “Easy Money.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of School</th>
<th>Money Saved</th>
<th>Federal Student Aid (non-debt)</th>
<th>Scholarships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$5,217.00</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$2,523.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$5,400.00</td>
<td>$2,524.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$5,400.00</td>
<td>$2,525.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$5,400.00</td>
<td>$2,526.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>$5,217.00</td>
<td>$21,600.00</td>
<td>$10,098.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total available for College</strong></td>
<td>$36,915.84</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When your child gets to college, what does their education money look like on paper in today’s dollars?
By keeping your child engaged and in good academic standing, you open doors to “Easy Money” he/she can use for college!
There are four main ways to finance higher education: grants, loans, scholarships, and work study programs. This section on financial aid helps fill in some of the details from the six simple steps.

**Grants**

Grants are education awards that come from the government and do not need to be repaid. They are generally need-based awards, and they can come from federal, state, local, or college-specific sources. The four main federal grants include:

- **Federal Pell Grant**
  - Generally for undergraduate students
  - Amounts may vary by year, but the maximum award $5,500 per semester.
  - Student must be enrolled at least part-time in a program that leads to an Associate or Bachelor degree or certificate
  - The amount you receive from a Pell Grant does not depend upon other aid you receive

- **Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)**
  - Awarded to undergraduate students who have exceptional financial need – priority is given to the same students who qualify for the Pell Grants and whose Expected Family Contribution is very low
  - Grants range from $100 to $4000 and can be affected by other aid
  - It is important to apply early because once these funds have been distributed, no more funds will be available
  - Not every school participates in this program, and the school’s financial aid office decides how to distribute these funds

- **Teacher Educational Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant Program**
  - This grant provides students who want to study to become teachers with up to $4,000 a year
  - Recipients must sign an *Agreement to Serve* promising to teach for four years at a low-income school in a high-need field within eight years after completing their degree
  - If the recipients do not meet those criteria, the grant will be converted to a Direct Unsubsidized Loan and the funds will need to be repaid with interest
• Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant
  o If you do not qualify for a Pell Grant but your parent or guardian was a member of the United States Armed Forces who was killed while serving in Iraq or Afghanistan after September 11, 2011, you may receive an award equal to the maximum Pell Grant
  o At the time of your parent or guardian’s death you must be under 24 years old or enrolled in college

Loans
Loans are borrowed funds that must be repaid with interest; they are a legal obligation and must be repaid even if a student drops out of school, graduates but does not find a job, or is unsatisfied with the quality of education received. There are several different types of loans:
• Federal Perkins Loan
  o Made to undergraduate, graduate, and professional students enrolled full- or part-time
  o Issued by the university (must be repaid directly to the university)
  o Based on financial need
• Direct Stafford Loans
  o Borrowed directly from the U.S. Department of Education

There are several different types of Direct Stafford Loans, including Direct Subsidized Loans, Direct Unsubsidized Loans, and Direct PLUS Loans:
• Direct Subsidized Loan
  o Need-based loans
  o While a student is enrolled full-time interest does not accrue on the loan
• Direct Unsubsidized Loan
  o Available regardless of financial need
  o Interest begins to accrue immediately and the student is responsible for paying all of it
• Direct PLUS Loan
  o Loans that parents can get to help their dependent undergraduate children pay for college

Work Study
Work study is a program that allows students to find on- or off-campus jobs so that they can work part-time to make money to pay for their education. This is available for both undergraduate and graduate students and can be based on need as well as the funds available.


Scholarships
Scholarships are generally based on merit and can be awarded by the specific university or college, the state, private donors, and community foundations. Scholarships do not need to be repaid unless the specific criteria of the scholarship are not met by the student. These vary greatly, and more information can be found at the Office of Financial Aid at the college or the high school.

For more information on all sources of aid, please call the Federal Student Aid Information Center toll free at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243)
Or visit http://studentaid.ed.gov/resources

“I want to be a doctor. I plan to be a surgeon and give 50% of what I make to my mother and father... that’s my idea.”
A Guide for Adult Learners

Programs Especially for Adults
As a parent, helping your child achieve higher education is a great tool for their success. It is important to know that you also have the opportunity to reach your goals through higher education. Knowing your educational options can help you clarify your academic goals and find programs that will best meet these goals.

These may include:
- Evening and weekend classes.
- Academic skills classes to help adult students brush up on reading, writing, math, test-taking, and study skills.
- Accelerated degree programs that offer intensive courses to help adults earn degrees in less time than traditional programs.
- Credit for prior learning (e.g., from previous college or military classes) or for past experience (e.g., from knowledge gained on the job and through community activities).
- Credit through examinations such as those offered by the College Level Examination Program (CLEP).
  - Shorten your path to a college degree by using the credit-by-examination program (CLEP). CLEP exams allow you to earn from three to twelve college credits towards your college degree for each exam you take. CLEP exams give you the opportunity to demonstrate college-level knowledge you've gained through prior study, independent study or through other courses. Check with the college you plan to attend before taking CLEP exams to find out about acceptance of CLEP exams for credit. More information about CLEP exams can be found at www.collegeboard.org/clep/

Colleges and universities may also offer services such as health insurance, child care, tutoring, job placement and career counseling to help adult students achieve their goals.

Enrolling in College
Once you find a program that fits your goals, you need to complete application forms and register for classes. Some colleges and universities have flexible deadlines, so adults can begin taking classes right away. It may take several weeks to get all of your paperwork and entrance requirements met, so it’s best to plan ahead:

- Contact college admissions and continuing education offices to request an application, financial aid forms and registration materials, including a course schedule for the next available class term.
- Ask if you are required to take any entrance or placement tests and when these will be offered (adults typically do not need to take admissions tests,
such as the SAT or ACT; you will, however, need to take a graduate admission test, such as the GRE or GMAT, if you plan to attend graduate school).

- Order transcripts from colleges and educational programs you have attended in the past.
- Create a file that contains information about educational activities you have completed. The file might include college transcripts, your resume, seminar, workshop outlines, and certificates. This information can help you write an admission essay, if required. Prepare a portfolio to receive credit for prior learning and plan your degree program with a college advisor.

**Other Concerns**

**Cost**
Many adults worry about the cost of attending college. These costs can range from tuition and books, to increased expenses for child care – and if you decide to reduce your hours or stop working while you attend college, a reduction in family income. As you think about how you can pay for your education, explore financial aid opportunities that can help meet college expenses. Check with your supervisor or human resources department to see if your employer has a tuition reimbursement program that could pay for some or all of the cost of college classes.

**Time**
The keys to success in college are often times the same as the keys to success in most endeavors: plan ahead, prioritize, be determined, ask for help when you need it – from friends, family, classmates, employers, college personnel and professors – and keep your sense of humor. Some of the steps you can take to prepare yourself before you enroll include:

- Talk with your family and employer about ways they can help you balance family, work, and school obligations.
- Consider how you could utilize school projects to help your employer.
- Think about how your priorities and commitments may need to change once you start classes. For example, will you still have time to clean the house regularly or can you ask your family to help or clean more often?
- Consider how you will handle the unexpected, from lost house keys to a week of sick kids, and make plans before emergencies.

“It’s not only a great way to encourage the little buddies to pursue higher education… But it is also a fantastic opportunity for college students to connect with [their] community.”

College Mentors for Kids, Inc.

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