



THE MENTOR TOOLKIT

110 MENTORING ACTIVITIES

LIFE SKILLS RELATIONSHIP BUILDING PREPARING FOR COLLEGE HOMEWORK ASSISTANCE CAREER PLANNING RESOURCES
TIME MANAGEMENT EDUCATIONAL PLANNING SELF-DISCOVERY FINANCIAL AID VALUES GUIDANCE GOAL-SETTING

STUDY SKILLS
SELF-ESTEEM



Take Stock in Children is a non-profit program which provides deserving low-income children in our community with scholarships to college or vocational school and guidance from caring mentors. Since 1995, Take Stock has provided over 17,000 children with scholarships and mentors in Florida.

WELCOME MENTORS!



Take Stock in Children has developed this Mentor Toolkit to make it easier for you to help your student. The Toolkit consists of simple, enjoyable activities that also have a serious purpose: to promote your student's success in school and in life. The Mentor Toolkit is not an instructional manual intended to tell you how to mentor your student. Every student is a unique individual. Every mentoring relationship is unique. Mentors and students should therefore decide for themselves how to use this collection of tools. Do not feel compelled to complete every activity. You can use these resources in any order—randomly or sequentially—or leave them aside until you feel they are needed. (If you wish to use a blueprint for addressing your student's needs, you can start with the academic calendar included in the Educational Planning section.)

Please remember that your primary task as a mentor is to meet regularly with your student. The two most important things mentors can do for their students are to listen to them and to encourage them to succeed.

Take some time to look over the Table of Contents and read the introduction to each section with your student. This will help you and your student decide how to use the Toolkit. We hope that these tools will make your mentoring sessions more productive and rewarding.

Take Stock in Children depends greatly on mentors to help children achieve their dreams. Like your student, you will receive support and encouragement every step of the way. This toolkit is one of the resources available to you. Thank you for being a Take Stock in Children mentor.

Take Stock in Children has a proven record of helping Florida's deserving low-income children graduate from high school, attend college, stay out of trouble, and become productive citizens. As a Take Stock in Children mentor, you are a vital part of an extraordinarily successful program that offers these young people real hope for a better life.

Take Stock in Children works because of the teamwork and the cooperation of individuals and their communities. This success is the result of a unique public-private partnership of private citizens, state government, business, school systems, social service agencies, and civic and religious organizations. Take Stock in Children serves at-risk children in all of Florida's counties.

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HOW TO IDENTIFY YOUR STUDENT'S NEEDS



INTRODUCTION: *HOW TO IDENTIFY YOUR STUDENT'S NEEDS*

More than 100 Fun Ways to Help Your Student!

Take Stock in Children has designed this mentor toolkit so that mentors may identify and address the specific needs of their students and have some fun in the process. This toolkit provides a great many activities to help your student, but do not be overwhelmed by its size! Mentors are not expected to do every activity. In fact, very few mentors and students will be able to get through every section. The purpose for providing such a wide range of resources is to allow you to be selective and to target your student's particular needs.

Mentoring Relationships Are Unique

Every Take Stock in Children student is a distinct individual with special qualities, gifts, and needs. Every Take Stock in Children mentor likewise brings his/her own particular blend of knowledge and experience to the table. Mentoring relationships are unique experiences.

Because students and mentors set the agenda, there is no right or wrong way to use this toolkit. You can start at the beginning and work your way to the end or merely pick and choose the activities you want to share with your student. Each of the sections represents a general area of student need; each of the activities focuses upon a specific student need.

You may not even wish to use the toolkit at all right now, choosing instead to concentrate on communicating with your student. That is the beauty and power of mentoring: A student's greatest need is for a caring adult to listen to his or her concerns. Your support and guidance may be all your student wants or needs at the present time.

Helping Students Set the Agenda

How should a mentor address the specific needs of a student? Mentoring should be enjoyable for the student. Students should be encouraged, but not forced, to talk about such things as preparing for college and planning for a career.

In many instances, all your student needs or wants is a confidant. In such cases, a "laid back" mentoring style is appropriate. Students and mentors can simply do fun things together during their mentoring sessions. Other students, however, may want mentors to help them in certain areas. This toolkit will allow mentors to focus upon students' specific academic and personal needs. It is therefore important that you and your student review each section and decide where to start. You can help your student set the agenda for mentoring sessions by using the Mentor-Student Agreement sheet in the first section. This activity allows your student the opportunity to communicate his/her expectations to you.

Four General Areas of Need

After consulting with mentors, local agencies, school personnel, and other sources, Take Stock in Children has identified four general areas of student need: Personal Development, Educational Planning, Academic Skills, and Career Planning.

In the toolkit, each of these four areas is divided into modules containing various individual activities. The toolkit is organized to make it easy for mentors to locate specific tools. For example, if your student has problems with homework, you can look under the third section, "Supporting Academic Success," and find the "Homework Assistance" tools. If you want to build your student's self-esteem, look for a corresponding tool under the "Personal Development" section.

Section Two: Personal Growth (Activities 1-28)

The first section of the toolkit contains tools that will promote students' personal growth and development by enabling them to learn more about themselves, recognize and appreciate their individual strengths, set realistic goals, and identify key values in their lives. Young people will enjoy completing these self-discovery activities because they enhance their sense of self-worth. Now they will have the opportunity to express themselves to a caring adult: "This is who I am, how I think, and what I want." As a mentor, you have the chance to support and empower your student: "That's great. How can I help you achieve your goals?"

Working on this section is a great way to build a close relationship with your student by providing him or her with encouragement and personal guidance. Helping students understand the relationship between their personal qualities and their goals is a great way to get them to start planning for their futures. As a mentor your job is to validate your student's sense of self-worth and promote his/her positive traits: "You have a lot of good qualities. How do you want to use them to achieve your goals?"

Section Three: Educational Planning (Activities 29-58)

Is your student taking the courses required for graduation? What courses does your student need to prepare for college? Will your student have enough money for college? Has your student signed up for the ACT or the SAT? Has he/she prepared for these tests?

The activities in this section are designed to help students prepare for high school and college. Educational planning is one area in which Take Stock in Children students will require much assistance. Such planning includes the following: identifying the right courses in high school and college, preparing for standardized tests, preparing for college, and obtaining financial aid.

Mentors are not expected to do the job of a guidance counselor; instead, these tools are constructed to make it easier for your student to work with his/her school guidance counselor. They are also intended to ensure that your student will not overlook important tasks or deadlines. The academic calendar provided in this section is a great tool for keeping your student on track. If you can get your student to use these tools, you will be able to accurately monitor your student's progress.

Section Four: Supporting Academic Success (Activities 59-82)

There are a few fundamental skills that every student must possess to succeed in high school and in college: time management, test-taking, and note-taking. The modules in this section contain practical worksheets that will help your student learn these basic skills. There is also a resource page that will direct your student to powerful online tools to help him/her with homework, writing, and other important academic tasks.

The resources in this module will allow you to monitor your student's academic performance, learn how to get help for your student in specific subject areas, and enable you to teach your student important organizational and academic skills. As a mentor, your long-term goal is to attempt to improve your student's self-discipline through the use of these tools and techniques.

When students go off to college, they will be on their own. They will have to decide for themselves how to spend their free time. Students who use the tools in these modules will gain experience constructing a work schedule, but following a schedule can be hard for a young person. Your encouragement can help a student learn the value of sticking to a schedule.

Section Five: Career Planning (Activities 83-110)

Talking about careers is a great way to motivate your student to think positively about the future. Young people want to be successful. They want to have exciting careers and a better lifestyle. But do they have a practical understanding of the world of work? Do they really know what they want out of a career? Are they aware of the many career possibilities available to them? Are they able to construct a practical career plan? Do they know what career skills and tools they will need to be employable?

In this section, students will be provided with web sites that allow them to learn about the four areas of career development: self-assessment, career exploration, career planning, and career preparation. Students who want to use their personal qualities and interests to identify possible career choices can use the first module on self-assessment. Those who simply want to learn more about careers can go straight to the second module and use the career exploration tools.

If your student wants to devise a concrete plan for a specific career, he/she can use Florida eCHOICES in the third module for this purpose. Finally, if your student wants to learn how to build a resume or portfolio, he/she can use the tools in the fourth module.

As they mature, students often change their career choices. This indecisiveness is normal, but, due to financial reasons, many students do not have the luxury of such a choice once they enter college. Mentors should encourage students to go back to the modules in this section as many times they wish before high school graduation, but also caution them that it is wise to develop a concrete career plan prior to entering college.

The Importance of Goals

This toolkit can have great practical value for students. But does your student have a plan for the future? Does he or she understand why all these activities are important? Perhaps the most important thing you can do is to talk with your student about his/her career and life goals. Students who are working for something they really want will work harder in school because they understand the practical significance of a college education. Students who can transform their dreams into practical goals have taken a big step on the road to success. Getting students to realize the importance of a college education is a major step in improving their academic performance.



PERSONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT



**PROMOTING PERSONAL GROWTH
SELF-DISCOVERY ACTIVITIES**

PERSONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Personal Guidance and Support: the Main Goals of a Mentor

Your main goals as a mentor are to provide personal guidance, encouragement, and emotional support for your student. You can only guide and support a student if you have a strong, close relationship with him or her--a relationship based upon mutual trust and respect. No manual, textbook, or expert can provide a blueprint to tell you exactly how to do these things because every mentoring relationship is unique.

Mentors build close relationships with their students by meeting with them on a regular basis; this provides students with a feeling of stability. By showing up every week, by acknowledging your student's feelings and concerns, by listening to his/her problems, by being honest, and by continually showing that you care, you can become a very powerful, positive influence in the life of your mentee.

Helping Students Realize Their Potential

As you begin to know your student better, you will also come to realize that he or she wants to learn about being an adult and what it takes to be successful in the adult world. This section contains activities intended to promote students' normal personal growth and development in simple, fun ways.

Research studies have shown that one of the quickest ways for mentors to form close relationships with their students is by means of activities. These activities will enable you to learn more about your student and to share your experience and knowledge with him/her. When mentors and students share their interests, values, and personal experiences, they begin to forge a bond of mutual trust and respect.

The purpose of these modules is to help mentors and students build a close relationship. These activities provide a fun way to become acquainted and identify common interests. As students share their likes, dislikes, and opinions with mentors, they will gradually begin to feel comfortable discussing more personal issues and problems with them.

MODULE 1: SETTING REALISTIC GOALS (ACTIVITIES 1-8)

This group of activities is intended to enable students to establish realistic short- and long-term goals. It is very easy for students to set long-term goals, but too often they lose sight of the fact that achieving short-term goals is the only way to attain the long-term ones. Young people often tend to set unrealistic goals because they do not understand the "baby steps" principle: every great achievement requires thousands of smaller ones.

Mentors can use this module to teach students basic organizational skills and to focus on transforming their dreams into practical goals. Your main objective as a mentor is to convince your student of the importance of short-term goals: "What are you going to do today, tomorrow, and next week to get closer to your goal?" Goal-setting activities are good ways for students and mentors to begin to develop plans and to think about the future.

MODULE 2: EXPLORING PERSONAL INTERESTS (ACTIVITIES 9-13)

These activities will enable mentors to learn more about their students by helping them identify their interests, their opinions on a wide range of topics, and their likes and dislikes. One of the best ways to connect with young people is to talk about things that interest them. This module will give you many good ideas for communicating with your student.

The module activities also provide mentors with a great opportunity not only to get to know their students better, but also to acquire a real sense of their needs, dreams, and personal attitudes. As you complete these activities, you will have many chances to share your opinions and insights with your student.

MODULE 3: BUILDING POSITIVE VALUES (ACTIVITIES 14-22)

This set of activities is designed to focus students' attention on the positive values that will make them successful and happy in life. Young people need to learn the basic principles of personal and social responsibility, the tactics of emotional control, and the importance of personal integrity if they are to fare well in school and in adult life; however, positive values are not easy to "teach" in the conventional sense.

As a mentor, you are a role model for your student. You will have many opportunities in this module to talk about the importance of values in your life and how the right set of values can play a deciding role in your student's life. You do not have to "preach" your own set of values, but you can point out the values that have been important to you in a non-judgmental manner. Your main goal here is merely to get your student to start thinking about the values that will serve as a guide for decision-making for the rest of his or her life.

MODULE 4: SELF-DISCOVERY (ACTIVITIES 23-31)

The final group of activities are fun ways for students to discover new and exciting things about themselves. Many students have a negative self-image that can become a self-fulfilling prophecy: "I am doing the best I can; I am just not that good at things." They may feel that they do not have many positive qualities. These activities are intended to help raise students' self-esteem by focusing upon their positive qualities and aspirations.

This module is a great way for mentors to raise the bar of expectations for students. Too often students do not see themselves in a positive light and therefore give up on their dreams. This module is intended to help mentors keep these dreams alive by encouraging students to believe in themselves.

MODULE 1: GOAL-SETTING

Activity #1: The Mentor-Student Agreement

- 1. This activity is a great way for mentors and students to reach a common understanding about what they want and expect from the mentoring relationship.
- 2. This form will also serve as a good self-discovery activity for both you and your student.
- 3. Ask your student to help you complete each of these sections.

What do we want to accomplish together?

What will we do to accomplish this goal?

Mentor:

Student:

How will we let each other know if we must miss our appointment?

I will do my best to complete the terms of this agreement.

Mentor's Signature

Date

Student's Signature

Date

Activity #2: Creating a Weekly Journal

1. Mentors and students can use this sheet on a weekly basis to monitor their progress.
2. Use of this tool on a regular basis can be an effective way to keep students on track.

Weekly Journal for Students and Mentors

Student	Mentor
Goals I Have Achieved This Week:	Goals I Have Achieved This Week:
Goals for Next Week:	Goals for Next Week:
Things I Need to Work On:	Things I Need to Work On:

Activity #3: Weekly Reaction Sheet

1. This worksheet can be used on a weekly basis to keep students focused on their short-term goals.
2. Make copies of this page and ask your student if he/she would like to fill it out.
3. Use the answers as the basis for further discussion on goals and ways to improve.

1. What was the high point of the week?

2. Whom did you get to know better this week?

3. What was the major thing you learned about yourself this week?

4. Did you institute any major changes in your life this week?

5. How could this week have been better?

6. What did you procrastinate about this week?

7. Identify three decisions or choices you made this week.

8. What were the results of these choices?

9. Did you make any plans this week for future events?

10. Unfinished Business

Activity #4: My Vision of Success

1. Ask your student to answer these questions.
2. Accentuate the positive aspects of each answer.
3. This worksheet is a good tool to help mentors discover how their students view themselves and the world.
4. What does your student consider "success" and "failure"?
5. What things does he/she fear most?
6. These are very important questions because they enable you to see things from the perspective of your student.
7. Talking about the meanings of success and failure is a great way to get your student focused on the future.

Please finish each sentence.

1. My greatest success:

2. A failure:

3. Something I did that helped someone:

4. Something I've done that I'm proud of:

5. Something I've learned from failure:

6. Something I didn't like doing:

7. The funniest thing I ever did:

8. Something I did that took courage:

9. Something I'm afraid of:

10. Something I'd really like to learn:

Activity #5: Imagining the Future

1. Getting young people to focus on their dreams is another great way to get them to think positively about their futures.
2. Ask your student to complete this worksheet.
3. Help your student think about ways to transform dreams into plans.

Tell about your dream for the future.

Tell what must be done to make this dream a reality.

Why will your dream become a reality?

Activity #6: What Are Your Goals In Life?

1. Ask your student to answer each of these questions.
2. Acknowledge the value of his/her answers.
3. Help the student focus on ways to achieve these goals.
4. Students who have concrete goals in life are more likely to be motivated to succeed.
5. Ask "How will you get there from here?" questions to get your student to think practically and realistically.

1. Things you would like to own:

1 year _____

5 years _____

10 years _____

2. Place you would like to live:

1 year _____

5 years _____

10 years _____

3. Place you would like to visit:

1 year _____

5 years _____

10 years _____

4. Job you would like to have:

1 year _____

5 years _____

10 years _____

5. Family life you would like to have:

1 year _____

5 years _____

10 years _____

6. Things you would like to know:

1 year _____

5 years _____

10 years _____

7. Person you want to be like:

1 year _____

5 years _____

10 years _____

Activity #7: My Performance Goals

1. Ask your student to identify his/her performance goals on this page.
2. Focus on the positive things he/she needs to do to achieve them.

1. My Personal Goal:

State a goal that would enhance your personal life.

How will I accomplish this goal?

Who will help me accomplish this goal?

2. My Social Goal:

State a goal that would enhance your social life.

How will I accomplish this goal?

Who will help me accomplish this goal?

3. My Academic Goal:

State a goal that would enhance your academic life.

How will I accomplish this goal?

Who will help me accomplish this goal?

Activity #8: Evaluating Your Academic Goals

1. This activity sheet can be used to prompt students to prioritize their academic goals and to begin to chart their short-term objectives.
2. Students can list the activities they intend to accomplish this grading period and put a number beside each activity from the most important (1) to the least important (10).

My Goals for This Grading Period

Name: _____

Date: _____

Rank of Goal	Goal	Goal Completed
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

What five things will I have to do to accomplish these goals?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

MODULE 2: PERSONAL INTERESTS

Activity #9: Discovering Your Interests

- 1. Ask your student to identify his/her favorites from each category.
- 2. As you compare "favorites," try to identify common interests.
- 3. Ask follow up questions: "Why is this your favorite?"

Student's		Mentor's
_____	Book	_____
_____	Song	_____
_____	Movie	_____
_____	TV Show	_____
_____	Friend	_____
_____	Color	_____
_____	Season	_____
_____	Movie Star	_____
_____	Holiday	_____
_____	Place to Be	_____
_____	Fun Things	_____
_____	Car	_____
_____	Toy/Game	_____
_____	Sport to Play	_____
_____	Sport to Watch	_____
_____	Food	_____
_____	Music	_____

Activity #10: What I Think

1. This is a good worksheet for encouraging students to express themselves in a positive manner.
2. Ask your student to complete each sentence as quickly as possible.
3. After completing ten or so, go back and ask him/her to elaborate on certain ones.
4. Before you ask these questions of your student, you might want to imagine how you would answer them and be prepared to relate your answers to those of your student.
5. You may spend as little or as much time as you wish on each question.
6. After your session, review your student's answers in your mind or write them down.
7. They will tell you a great deal about his/her values, personal history, and experiences.
8. Use this information as a basis for future talks.

1. If I had a week's vacation, I would...
2. On weekends I wish my family would...
3. If I had \$10, I would...
4. I think my parents should...
5. The thing that scares me the most is...
6. People I like always...
7. I cry when...
8. I'm afraid to...
9. I'm happy when...
10. I'm proud that I...
11. When I grow up, I want to be...
12. The funniest thing I ever saw was...
13. The most important quality in a family is...
14. I like people who...
15. Twenty years from now, I would like to...
16. I am happiest when...
17. If I saw someone shoplifting, I would...
18. If I saw someone littering, I would...
19. When I become a father or mother, I...
20. I am best at...
21. I get angry when...
22. In school I do best when...
23. My friends think I am...
24. I am loneliest when...
25. I feel most loved when...

Activity #1 I: Conversation Topics

1. Here is a list of conversation topics to get your student to express his/her opinions.
2. Ask your student to comment on each of these questions.
3. Use his/her answers as topics for further discussion.

1. What is the greatest lesson you have ever learned?
2. Describe yourself as a stranger might see you.
3. Describe yourself as your best friend knows you.
4. What are the qualities a best friend must possess?
5. What makes you special?
6. Describe the qualities you most admire in someone you might call a *hero*.
7. Describe your favorite relative.
8. How do people know when you are upset?
9. Describe your favorite teacher.
10. Describe the ideal job for a teenager.
11. Who has it easier -- girls or guys? Defend your position.
12. When have you been wrongly accused? Explain.
13. What must a person do to be trusted?
14. What famous person would you most like to meet? Why?
15. If you could live anywhere in the world, where would it be? Why?
16. What is the best movie you have ever seen? Why is it the best?
17. Why shouldn't parents try to pick their children's friends?

Activity #12: My Opinions

1. Ask your student's opinion on any or all of these topics.
2. From the responses you will learn much more about your student.
3. Your student will also feel good knowing that an adult cares enough to ask his/her opinion.

1. Capital Punishment

2. The Future

3. Clothes

4. The Environment

5. Gossip

6. Violence on TV

7. Manners

8. Do we have "too much" freedom in society?

9. Peer Pressure

10. Drugs

11. Responsibility

12. Heroes

13. Love

14. People Who Are Different

15. School Rules

Activity #13: My Likes and Dislikes

1. Ask your student the following questions.
2. Discuss his/her answers and write them down.
3. This survey is a good tool for getting students to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses as well as their desires and goals.
4. As you listen to your student's answers, be prepared to follow up with more questions.

1. If I could change something about myself, I would _____

2. If I could have anything I wanted, it would be _____

3. The thing I like most about school is _____

4. The thing I don't like about school is _____

5. The class that is hardest for me is _____

6. My favorite class is _____

7. When I don't do as well in school as I can, it is because _____

8. What school subjects do you do well in? _____

9. What do you think you might need extra help in? _____

10. When I have leisure time, I like to _____

11. I get upset when _____

12. I don't like people to _____

MODULE 3:

Activity #14: Being Responsible

1. This exercise is an easy way to get your student to realize that "the simple things in life can be the most important."
2. Ask your student these questions and point out the importance of these activities.
3. Don't be judgmental, but do urge your student to be honest about his/her weak areas.

Do you...	Yes	Need Improvement
1. Get to school on time? _____		
2. Have paper, pencil, and books? _____		
3. Do your class work neatly? _____		
4. Study for tests? _____		
5. Complete all assignments? _____		
6. Do extra credit assignments? _____		
7. Pay attention in class? _____		
8. Turn in your homework? _____		
9. Get good grades? _____		
10. Do your best? _____		
11. Realize the importance of school? _____		

Goal – I will try to improve in the following areas _____

Activity #15: Understanding Emotions

1. Ask your student to answer these questions.
2. Think of positive ways for your student to deal with these emotions.
3. Getting young people to reflect on the relationship between their behaviors and their feelings is an important step in their personal growth.
4. Point out that all of us have negative emotional reactions, but that these reactions don't have to lead to self-destructive behaviors or attitudes.

1. When I can't have my own way, I _____

2. When I fail at something, I _____

3. When I am nervous, I _____

4. When I am punished, I _____

5. When I get angry with my teacher, I _____

6. When I can't go out with my friends, I _____

7. When my friends make me mad, I _____

8. When I am picked on by others, I _____

9. When I'm bored, I _____

10. When I am embarrassed, I _____

Activity #16: Building Self-Esteem

1. Self-esteem is a belief in oneself and a belief in one's self-worth.
2. Here are six steps for building your student's self-esteem.
3. Ask your student to think about each step before answering.
4. Use these answers to point out the positive qualities of your student.

Step 1: Think of yourself as beautiful and talented just the way you are. You have your own unique qualities that make you your own person. What are your strengths? **Have your student write down five strengths.**

Step 2: Be responsible for yourself and your decisions. Don't be a follower. **List three decisions you need to make on your own.**

Step 3: Recognize mistakes as stepping-stones to success. No one is perfect. Don't let a defeat or a mistake cause you to lose faith in yourself. **List a mistake that helped you learn or get better.**

Step 4: Feeling good about yourself spills over to others. The people you like are probably friendly and fun to be around. Show friends you have an interest in them. **List three things you can do to show people you care about them.**

Step 5: You will feel better about yourself if you think things through. **Make a list of three things you want most to learn or improve upon.**

Step 6: Get involved in activities in which you can have success. Join a club or seek friends who are doing something that will make you a better person. **List leisure activities that you want to do to improve yourself.**

Activity #17: Valuing Yourself

1. "Self-acceptance" is a specific stage in self-discovery that occurs whenever students are willing to look at themselves objectively (with the help of an adult).
2. When they do, they will realize that their strengths far outweigh their weaknesses.
3. Ask your student to reflect on these questions and try to answer them honestly.
4. This exercise can give mentors the opportunity to validate their students' positive self-perception.

What three things do I like about myself?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What are my strengths?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What activities can make me a better and stronger person?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Activity #18: Do You Know Your Values?

1. This worksheet gives students a chance to "evaluate their values."
2. In so doing, they will be forced to reflect upon what is most important to them.
3. Before students make decisions in their lives, they should think about their priorities.
4. Using a ten-point scale, have your student rate the following items according to how high a priority they are in his/her life.
5. Give one point to items that are not very important and up to ten points to those that are most important.
6. Students may assign the same rating to more than one item.
7. This sheet is a great way to gain insight into your student's view of things.
8. It is also a great self-discovery tool that makes goal-setting much easier.

- _____ Doing my best in school
- _____ Being popular
- _____ Friendships
- _____ Respecting other individuals
- _____ Self-respect
- _____ Graduating from high school
- _____ Honesty in myself and others
- _____ Being independent
- _____ Being responsible for my actions
- _____ Religion
- _____ Getting along with my parents
- _____ Having money
- _____ Staying drug-free
- _____ Helping others
- _____ Having a healthy body
- _____ Going to college
- _____ Being successful

Which were your highest priorities? _____

Activity #19: Problem-Solving

1. Ask your student to think of a problem that he/she has not been able to solve.
2. Use this worksheet to address the problem and come up with solutions.
3. You can use this simple method on any problem your student may have.
4. The ability to solve real-life problems is critical in the process of personal development.

Step 1: Identify the problem

1. Have your student explain the problem in detail.
2. Try to help him/her clarify all the factors.
3. Do not proceed until you both agree that you have identified the *real issue*.

Step 2: Brainstorm

1. Discuss alternative solutions with your student.
2. Agree upon a feasible set of solutions.
3. Do not proceed until all possible solutions have been identified.

Step 3: Evaluate

1. Help your student identify the pros and cons of each solution.
2. Help your student predict the possible outcomes of each solution.
3. Do not proceed until every alternative has been evaluated.

Step 4: Decide

1. Ask your student to choose the solution that has the "most pros" and "least cons."
2. Ask your student to explain why his/her solution is the best possible one.
3. Do not proceed until your student is certain of his/her decision.

Step 5: Plan

1. Help your student identify the best ways to implement his/her solution.
2. Help your student choose the best plan.
3. Encourage your student to use the plan to resolve the problem.

Activity #20: Understanding Peer Pressure

Purpose: This activity is designed to get students to understand peer pressure and to think about ways to handle it.

What You Need to Do:

1. Have your student get a pencil and a piece of paper.
2. Discuss the concept of peer pressure—both negative and positive—with your student.
3. Start by telling your student that we have all encountered times when friends have tried to persuade us to do things we have not been comfortable doing.
4. Explain that sometimes resisting pressure from friends is difficult.
5. Emphasize that developing positive ways to deal with peer pressure from friends can make things much easier.

What Your Student Can Do:

1. Have your student identify a peer-pressure situation from his/her own experience.
2. Have your student create a "peer pressure log" by dividing a page into the following five sections:
 - a. Section 1: Who pressured you?
 - b. Section 2: What activity/behavior were you being pressured to do?
 - c. Section 3: What arguments did the person(s) pressuring you use?
 - d. Section 4: How did you respond? If you tried to resist, what did you say or do?
 - e. Section 5: What might you say or do in the future to resist peer pressure?
3. Ask your student to fill in the first four sections of the log.
4. Help your student generate positive ways of dealing with similar peer pressure in the future.
5. Praise your student when he/she resists the pressure of friends and peers.

Follow-Up:

1. Help your student identify friends who are positive influences.
2. Practice refusal skills with your student, so that he/she is prepared to refuse alcohol or getting into a car when the driver is drunk.
3. Take turns playing the role of the person pressured to demonstrate refusal methods.

Activity #2 I: What Would You Do?

1. Here are a few interesting situations that you can discuss with your student to get him/her to think about "doing the right thing" in situations that call for quick decisions.
 2. Read each scenario to your student and ask for an answer.
 3. Ask your student to think about the values that are expressed by way of his/her answers.
-
1. You are going over to your friend's apartment building, and as you walk into the courtyard, you see your friend and another person climbing out of the basement window with an electric drill. The janitor comes running around from the back and stops all three of you. He asks whether you saw the others climb out of the window. What would you say?
 2. You and a friend go to a party, at which most of the kids are two years older than you. When you get there, some of the other kids start teasing your friend, but they don't know you're with him. What do you do?
 3. You are taking a test and you notice that a cute boy (girl), whom you have been trying to get to notice you, is sitting next to you. You notice that he (she) is copying your test answers and that the teacher is walking up and down the aisle. What do you do?
 4. You are baby-sitting and you have been told not to let anyone in the house. Two very good friends come by and want to come in. You know nothing bad could possibly happen. What do you do?
 5. You are eating dinner at a friend's house, and his mother serves you this horrible-looking, smelly stuff. Everyone is sitting around the table enjoying it. What do you do?

Activity #22: Learning Self-Control

1. To talk to your student about the importance of self-control, locate three articles in the newspaper about real people who have exercised self-control.
2. Ask what self-control means to your student and ask him/her to write down what would have happened to these three people if they had not exercised self-control.

1.

2.

3.

MODULE 4: SELF-DISCOVERY

Activity #23: Are You a Creator?

1. Creators like to compose music, write books, and interpret the world in new ways.
2. Think of the best ways to utilize these answers to encourage your student to use his/her talents as a creator in school and in life.

	YES	NO
1. Do you like to use your imagination?	_____	_____
2. Do you like to make up new ideas?	_____	_____
3. Are you good in art, music, or writing stories, poetry, etc.?	_____	_____
4. Are you a self-starter?	_____	_____
5. Do you like to try new things?	_____	_____
6. Can you communicate with people by doing something in music or art?	_____	_____
7. Do you like to see different people in different places?	_____	_____
8. Do you like to take ideas and make up songs, artwork or stories about them?	_____	_____
9. Do you often decide things without looking at the facts?	_____	_____
10. Do you make pictures or words in your mind when others talk?	_____	_____
11. Do you enjoy working with others to brainstorm ideas?	_____	_____
12. Do you enjoy music and plays?	_____	_____

Activity #24: Are You a Doer?

1. Doers are people who like to work out-of-doors with plants and animals, who are inclined to work with tools, and who are often described as athletic, reserved, or quiet.
2. Have your student answer the questions on this worksheet.
3. As you listen to the comments, think of the best ways to utilize these answers to encourage your student to use his/her talents as a doer in school and in life.

	YES	NO
1. Do you work well with your hands?	_____	_____
2. Do you like to be outdoors?	_____	_____
3. Do you enjoy working with tools?	_____	_____
4. Do you enjoy taking apart and reassembling mechanical things?	_____	_____
5. Do you enjoy working with plants or animals?	_____	_____
6. Would you prefer physical activity instead of working at a desk?	_____	_____
7. Do you like playing sports?	_____	_____
8. Is keeping in shape important to you?	_____	_____
9. Are math, physical education, and crafts things you do best?	_____	_____
10. Can you follow directions and read diagrams for putting things together?	_____	_____
11. If someone explains how to operate something, do you learn quickly?	_____	_____
12. Do you like to work with people as part of a team?	_____	_____
13. Do you understand things better when you see pictures and drawings instead of reading about them?	_____	_____

Activity #25: Are You a Helper?

1. Helpers like to work with people, like to communicate with others, are interested in teaching and/or caring for others, and are often described as outgoing.
2. Have your student answer the questions on this worksheet.
3. As you listen to the comments, think of the best ways to utilize these answers to encourage your student to use his/her talents as a helper in school and in life.

	YES	NO
1. Do you like to work with people?	_____	_____
2. Do you like doing volunteer work?	_____	_____
3. Do you like to make new friends?	_____	_____
4. Do your friends come to you with their problems?	_____	_____
6. Do you like to teach others how to do things?	_____	_____
7. Do you like to go to parties or have parties?	_____	_____
8. Do you like English and Social Studies?	_____	_____
9. Can you tell what people are really like?	_____	_____
10. Are you good at dealing with people older than you?	_____	_____
11. Do you enjoy being a member of clubs and working in club activities?	_____	_____
12. Would you rather "do good" than make a lot of money?	_____	_____
13. Are you good at explaining things to people?	_____	_____
14. Do you like to work at jobs just for the fun of it when no one knows you've done them?	_____	_____

Activity #26: Are You an Influencer?

1. Influencers like to work with other people, influence other people, lead other people, manage money or companies, work in sales, and are often described as outgoing.
2. Have your student answer the questions on this worksheet.
3. As you listen to the comments, think of the best ways to utilize these answers to encourage your student to use his/her talents as an influencer in school and in life.

	YES	NO
1. Do you like to discuss your reasons for things with others?	_____	_____
2. Have you ever been elected to be an officer in a club?	_____	_____
3. Do you like to sell things?	_____	_____
4. Do you take charge in a group?	_____	_____
5. Do you do well in Social Studies or English?	_____	_____
6. Do you enjoy working with people?	_____	_____
7. If you have a choice, do you usually sit in the front of the class?	_____	_____
8. Do you like to do crossword puzzles?	_____	_____
9. Do you get good grades on your creative writing?	_____	_____
10. Do groups of other people ask you to speak for them?	_____	_____
11. Do you like to read?	_____	_____
12. Do you want to make a lot of money and be respected by others?	_____	_____
13. Would you like to have your own business or be president of a company?	_____	_____

Activity #27: Are You an Investigator?

1. Investigators like to investigate, evaluate, and solve problems.
2. Have your student answer the questions on this worksheet.
3. As you listen to the comments, think of the best ways to utilize these answers to encourage your student to use his/her talents as an investigator in school and in life.

	YES	NO
1. Do you enjoy working on puzzles?	_____	_____
2. Do you like to read books and magazines about science?	_____	_____
3. Are you usually curious about how things work?	_____	_____
4. Do you do better in math and science?	_____	_____
5. Can you work on a problem a long time until you find the answer?	_____	_____
6. Do you enjoy helping other people with their problems?	_____	_____
7. Do you like to work alone?	_____	_____
8. Do you try to find better ways to do things?	_____	_____
9. When someone tells you that something is impossible to do, do you want to try to find a way to do it?	_____	_____
10. When you are putting something together and a part is missing, do you find something to take its place?	_____	_____
11. Do you enjoy mystery stories?	_____	_____
12. Do you like finding out about new things?	_____	_____
13. Do you like working with numbers and charts?	_____	_____

Activity #28: Are You an Organizer?

1. Organizers like to work with numbers, facts, and data. They also like to handle details and follow instructions. They are often somewhat reserved.
2. Have your student answer the questions on this worksheet.
3. As you listen to the comments, think of the best ways to utilize these answers to encourage your student to use his/her talents as an organizer.

	YES	NO
1. Do you enjoy keeping your schoolwork organized and putting things away neatly?	_____	_____
2. Do you prefer working with numbers and facts instead of people?	_____	_____
3. Do you follow instructions well and with enthusiasm?	_____	_____
4. Do you follow other people's plans and do a good job?	_____	_____
5. Do you quickly see things that are different and things that are similar?	_____	_____
6. Do you enjoy helping others get organized?	_____	_____
7. Are math and English your best subjects?	_____	_____
8. Do you complete paperwork and fill out forms quickly and accurately?	_____	_____
9. Do you enjoy working with computers and calculators?	_____	_____
10. Do you like following schedules and routines?	_____	_____
11. Do you solve problems in an orderly way?	_____	_____
12. When you listen, do you hear and remember all the details?	_____	_____



EDUCATIONAL PLANNING GUIDE



EDUCATIONAL PLANNING -- HIGH SCHOOL, COLLEGE, AND FINANCIAL AID PLANNING

INTRODUCTION

The Goals of Educational Planning

Take Stock in Children students need a great deal of assistance in all phases of educational planning. The four modules in this section are designed to help your student develop an appropriate educational plan for both high school and college, prepare for important standardized tests, and apply for financial aid.

Mentors Are Facilitators—Counselors Are Experts

As a mentor, your job will be to assist your student in the planning process by working through the various modules with him or her. You are not expected to be an expert educational planner. Guidance counselors are the experts in the field of educational planning.

How Mentors Can Help

Your task will be to use the activities in these modules to assist your student in the preparation of a plan that he/she can submit to a guidance counselor for assessment and/or approval. Guidance counselors are very busy people; they can help your student much more easily and quickly through the use of these tools.

How Will These Modules Help Students Plan?

These modules are designed to help students schedule the right courses, meet important deadlines, prepare for major events, and pay for college. Students who use them will be able to get very specific, pertinent information from their counselors--information that will help them make important decisions.

The Key Objectives of Planning

As you work through the modules with your student, make sure that he/she understands the importance of key deadlines and tasks. The academic calendar is a good monitoring tool that can make it much easier for your student to plan and stay on track. An old adage rings true: "People don't plan to fail; they fail to plan." These modules can help Take Stock in Children students plan for success.

Take Stock Students Are Pioneers

Many Take Stock in Children students will be the first members of their families to enter college. They are literally "pioneers" embarking upon an exciting but often intimidating journey into unknown territory. As you work with your student, remember that it is very natural for our students to feel overwhelmed at times and to want to give up when things seem too complicated or difficult.

MODULE 1: PLANNING FOR HIGH SCHOOL (ACTIVITIES 29-36)

The first set of activities is designed to help students understand the requirements for high school graduation and learn how to construct a four-year high school course schedule. For a variety of reasons, students sometimes do not schedule the courses required for high school graduation and are not aware of the courses they will need for college.

Students should begin to plan for high school in the 7th, 8th, and 9th grades. Students who are already in high school should also work through these modules to make certain that they are taking the right courses and that they know their important deadlines and tasks. This module includes a comprehensive task list for each year of high school. Students who complete these tasks in a timely manner will be able to meet their key deadlines.

The tools in this module are intended to help students construct a tentative course schedule for high school and create a task list. The graduation requirements are minimum Florida standards. Please note that local school districts are authorized and encouraged to establish additional graduation requirements. Have your student check with the guidance office to identify any possible additional graduation requirements as soon as possible. Also have a counselor review your student's academic calendar closely each year.

Mentors can help students complete a four-year course schedule that fulfills their schools' graduation requirements and best prepares them for college or vocational school. This schedule should then be given to a school guidance counselor for review.

MODULE 2: PREPARING FOR STANDARDIZED TESTS (ACTIVITIES 37-45)

The second group of activities will direct your student to resources that can help him/her prepare for standardized tests. Standardized tests are used to measure students' academic progress and determine their eligibility for high school graduation. They are also one of the key factors in assessing a student's college eligibility.

Students in Florida high schools are required to pass the 10th Grade FCAT to be eligible for graduation. Students who excel on the SAT or ACT may qualify for scholarships, while those who perform poorly on these tests may not be able to attend their chosen college. Standardized tests are therefore very important events in a student's academic career.

This module will instruct students on the three ways to prepare for standardized tests: how to research the particular tests, how to acquire practice taking standardized tests, and the best ways to improve basic test-taking skills. Mentors have five key objectives in this module; they should encourage their students to:

1. Identify Registration and Test Dates
2. Learn How to Register for Tests
3. Understand Test Directions and Test Construction
4. Develop Test-Taking Skills
5. Devise an Effective Test Preparation Strategy

MODULE 3: PREPARING FOR COLLEGE (ACTIVITIES 46-52)

The third module focuses upon the steps students need to take to properly prepare for college. Take Stock in Children students come from low-income families in which there may be no member who has attended college; consequently, they may need a great deal of guidance and information if they are to be ready for college. This module makes it easy for mentors to show students how to construct practical plans for college. The activities will provide students with resources and concrete information to enable them to:

1. Select the Right Colleges
2. Apply to Colleges
3. Use Internet Resources to Plan for College

MODULE 4: FINANCIAL AID (ACTIVITIES 53-58)

The last module consists of a simple tutorial on financial aid: What are the types of financial aid and how can students obtain more financial aid? Take Stock in Children students receive a college tuition scholarship, but this scholarship will not cover all their college expenses. This module will provide students with information about Pell Grants, Bright Futures Scholarships, and many other sources of financial aid.

Take Stock in Children students should be encouraged to develop practical plans for paying for college early in their high school careers and to utilize the resources offered in this module. This module is intended to offer students a wide range of information about alternative ways to fund their college educations; it also includes practical tools to estimate college costs.

Your job as a mentor is to make certain your student understands how to apply for financial aid, the various types of financial aid, and the importance of creating a realistic budget to estimate the amount of financial aid he/she will need to attend college. You and your student can also use the online resources in this module to search for scholarships and other sources of financial aid.

Educational Planning Can Make All the Difference

These modules contain a great deal of practical information that can benefit every student. Educational planning is a very important set of processes that can often determine if a student succeeds or fails. Missing just one important deadline, failing to perform just one critical task, or not taking just one particular course can be enough to keep a student out of college. By means of proper planning, students can better prepare to meet their important tasks and deadlines, especially registering for standardized tests, applying for financial aid, and applying to college.

As you work through these modules with your student, you will quickly learn the importance of the information. Use of these tools can make monitoring your student's progress much easier.

MODULE 1: PLANNING FOR HIGH SCHOOL

Activity #29: Graduation Requirements Checklist

1. This checklist identifies the minimum Florida graduation requirements.
 2. Have your student obtain a copy of his/her transcript and use it to complete this checklist.
- (Note: Your student's school may have additional requirements. Check with the guidance office to find out.)**

PART 1: Credits Earned for High School Graduation

Place an "X" on a line if all credits in the area have been earned.

STUDENTS MUST ATTAIN 24 ACADEMIC CREDITS. The 24 credits shall be distributed as follows:

- _____ Language Arts: 4 Credits. English courses must include major concentrations in composition and literature.
- _____ Mathematics: 3 Credits. Algebra I must be included.
- _____ Science: 3 Credits. Two of the science credits must include a laboratory component.
- _____ American History: 1 Credit.
- _____ World History: 1 Credit.
- _____ Economics: .5 Credit.
- _____ American Government: .5 Credit.
- _____ Practical/Vocational/Performing Art: 1 Credit.
- _____ Life Management Skills: .5 Credits.
- _____ Physical Education: 1 Credit.
- _____ Electives: 8.5 Credits.

PART 2: Credits Needed for High School Graduation

Place a number in a box to indicate how many credits your student still needs to complete to fulfill the requirement.

- _____ Language Arts: 4 Credits. English courses must include major concentrations in composition and literature.
- _____ Mathematics: 3 Credits. Algebra I must be included.
- _____ Science: 3 Credits. Two of the science credits must include a laboratory component.
- _____ American History: 1 Credit.
- _____ World History: 1 Credit.
- _____ Economics: .5 Credit.
- _____ American Government: .5 Credit.
- _____ Practical/Vocational/Performing Art: 1 Credit.
- _____ Life Management Skills: .5 Credits.
- _____ Physical Education: 1 Credit.
- _____ Electives: 8.5 Credits.

Total Credits Still Needed for Graduation _____

Activity #30: Are You Eligible to Graduate ?**General Eligibility Requirements**

Have your student check "yes" or "no" for the following statements. The goal here is to make certain that your student understands all graduation requirements.

1. **Pass the 10th Grade FCAT.** Students must earn a passing score on the grade 10 Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test to be eligible for graduation.

Yes _____ No _____

2. **Grade Point Average.** Students entering 9th grade are required to have a minimum grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 grading scale for promotion to a higher grade, for extra-curricular eligibility, and for graduation from high school.

Yes _____ No _____

3. **Elective Credits.** No student shall be granted credit toward high school graduation for enrollment in more than a total of nine elective credits in remedial programs.

Yes _____ No _____

4. No student shall be granted credit toward high school graduation for enrollment in more than one credit in exploratory vocational courses.

Yes _____ No _____

5. No student shall be granted credit toward high school graduation for enrollment in more than three credits in practical arts, family, and consumer classes.

Yes _____ No _____

6. No student shall be granted credit toward high school graduation for enrollment in any Level I course unless the student's assessment indicates that a more rigorous course of study would be inappropriate.

Yes _____ No _____

Activity #3 I: Freshman/Sophomore Course Planner

Help your student complete the Course Planner worksheet and show it to a guidance counselor for review.

	FRESHMAN YEAR		SOPHOMORE YEAR	
	Fall Semester	Spring Semester	Fall Semester	Spring Semester
ENGLISH				
Course Title				
MATHEMATICS				
Course Title				
HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES				
Course Title				
SCIENCE				
Course Title				
ART				
Course Title				
LANGUAGE				
Course Title				
Electives				

Activity #32: Junior/Senior Course Planner

Help your student complete the Course Planner worksheet and show it to a guidance counselor for review.

	JUNIOR YEAR		Senior Year	
	Fall Semester	Spring Semester	Fall Semester	Spring Semester
ENGLISH				
Course Title				
MATHEMATICS				
Course Title				
HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES				
Course Title				
SCIENCE				
Course Title				
ART				
Course Title				
LANGUAGE				
Course Title				
ELECTIVE				
Course Title				

Activity #33: Freshman Year Task List

1. This task list contains a number of valuable activities for your student's freshman year.
2. Spend some time discussing each of these activities with your student and encourage him/her to do as many as possible.
3. As your student completes each one of the activities, have him/her put an "X" on the line next to the item.

Identify registration dates for standardized tests.

(Students should record these dates as far into the future as possible.)

Compile a four-year course schedule.

(Make certain your four-year schedule has been examined by a guidance counselor.)

Learn about preparation resources for the SAT offered at school.

Find out more about college preparation resources available through the school.

Learn as much as possible about financial aid resources available through the school and in the community. (This is very important. There are many scholarships available to students in their communities; students should ask school officials and guidance personnel to direct them toward these resources.)

Attend any college fairs held at your school.

Start thinking about what colleges you might want to attend.

Try to visit a campus in the summer.

Use the internet to visit college web sites.

Begin saving for college (books, room and board, living expenses).

Keep an academic portfolio and/or student resume.

Create a study schedule to improve your performance.

Start preparing for the PSAT.

Activity #34: Sophomore Task List

1. This task list contains a number of valuable activities for your student's sophomore year.
2. Spend some time discussing each of these activities with your student and encourage him/her to do as many as possible.
3. As your student completes each one of the activities, have him/her put an "X" on the line next to the item.
4. Ask your student to have a counselor review the list and make recommendations.

September

- Consult your guidance counselor about taking the PSAT in October.
- If you plan to take the ACT, talk to your guidance counselor about taking the PLAN this fall. The PLAN is a preliminary standardized test that will give students some preparation for the ACT. (PLAN does not have national testing dates, so ask your guidance counselor about test dates offered by your school.)
- You need to register several weeks in advance for the PLAN and the PSAT, so consult your guidance counselor early in September.
- Prepare for the SAT/ACT. See if your school offers prep classes. If not, go to the SAT, ACT, and College Board web sites; these sites offer free preparation resources.
- Start narrowing down your career and college searches.

October

- Take the PSAT for practice. The results will not be used for college admission.
- Keep a record of community involvement and participation activities. Colleges often want to know about "leadership activities." (Volunteer activities can be a very big plus on your student record.)

November

- Start saving your best work for your portfolio.
(Refer to the Career Development Program in this Guide to learn more about portfolios.)

December

- Look at the results of your PLAN and/or PSAT.
- Read the materials sent with your test results.
- Consult your guidance counselor to explore ways to improve on future tests.

February

- Visit your guidance office and browse through the college literature.
- Surf the web for more information on colleges.

Activity #35: Junior Year Task List

1. This task list contains a number of valuable activities for your student's junior year.
2. Spend some time discussing each of these activities with your student and encourage him/her to do as many as possible.
3. As your student completes each one of the activities, have him/her put an "X" on the line next to the item.
4. Ask your student to have a counselor review it and make recommendations.

September

- Meet with your counselor to review your courses for this year and plan your schedule for the next year.
- Evaluate your transcript with your counselor.
- Check number of credits earned, distribution of courses successfully completed, examinations passed, and cumulative GPA.
- Keep saving samples of your work, especially projects you have completed.
(This demonstrates creativity as well as leadership.)
- Register for the October PSAT.

October

- Take the PSAT exam. Even though these scores will not be used for college admission, it is still a good idea to take this test.
- Compare personal academic achievements with academic admission requirements for colleges you have selected.
- Obtain dates and locations of college fairs and parent nights in your area.

November

- Fee waivers for standardized tests are available for students whose families are low-income. Check with your guidance counselor.

December

- Find out what standardized tests your college prefers and accepts!
- This is the time to determine your registration deadlines for the Sat I, Sat II, ACT.
- Make a timeline of deadlines and hang it on the wall to remind yourself when things need to be sent in.

January

- If you were never issued a Social Security number, contact the closest Social Security office as soon as possible to obtain a number.
- When you get your Social Security card, keep it in a secure spot in your wallet.
- Research summer programs for high school juniors and apply.
- Students whose native language is not English should check with colleges as to whether or not they should take the TOEFL test.

Activity #35: Junior Year Task List (continued)**February**

- Meet with your guidance counselor to discuss your preliminary list of colleges.
- Discuss whether your initial list of colleges meets your needs and interests.
- Register for the March SAT I if you have completed the math courses covered on the SAT I. If not, plan to take the SAT I in May or June.

March

- Start preparing a college budget to determine what your expenses will be. Identify what is covered and not covered by your scholarship(s).

April

- Register for the May/June SAT I and /or the May/June Sat II: Subject Tests.
- Not all Sat II Subject Tests are given on every test date.
- Check the calendar carefully to determine when the Subject Tests you want are offered.
- Eliminate colleges from your original list and add others you have found.

May

- Attend college fairs.
- Sign up for summer school courses that might help you.
- Ask your counselor about college interviews and the college essay.

June

- This is a good time to visit colleges.

July/August

- Begin preparing for the actual application process.
- Research the college essay requirement: Will you have to write a college essay?
- Assemble your portfolio. What things have you accomplished in high school?

Activity #36: Senior Year Task List

1. This task list contains a number of valuable activities for your student's senior year.
2. Spend some time discussing each of these activities with your student and encourage him/her to do as many as possible.
3. As your student completes each one of the activities, have him/her put an "X" on the line next to the item.
4. Ask your student to have a counselor review it and make recommendations.

September

- Meet with admissions representatives who are visiting your school.
- Make a list of test names, dates, fees and registration deadlines, and of deadlines for college admissions and financial aid application.
- Remember that you must take tests like the SAT and ACT at least six weeks before the deadline in order for scores to be submitted to colleges.
- Begin asking teachers, guidance counselors, and employers for letters of recommendation to include in your admission packet.
- Provide recommendation forms, any special instructions, and a stamped, addressed business envelope to the people writing your recommendation.
- Be thoughtful. Write thank-you notes to those who write recommendations for you and keep them informed about your decisions.

October

- Take the SAT or ACT exam, if necessary.
- Work on admissions application essays.
- Narrow your college choices down to a final list.
- Find out which financial aid applications your college choices require and when they are due.

November

- Take the SAT or ACT if appropriate.
- Obtain financial aid applications from your guidance office or college.
- Read them carefully to determine what information is required and when the applications are due and how long it takes them to be processed.
- Begin preparing your college applications.
- Check colleges for deadlines.
- Obtain FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) from your guidance office.
- Do not submit it before January 1st.
- Keep all records, test score reports, and copies of applications for admission and financial aid.

December

- Send official test scores to colleges on your list if you have not done so.

Activity #36: Senior Year Task List (continued)

- ___ Ask your parents to save their year-end payroll stubs if these show their earnings for the year. You may need them for financial aid eligibility reviews by schools.

January

- ___ Submit your completed FAFSA form as soon as possible after January 1st.
- ___ Make copies of forms you submit!
- ___ January is Financial Aid Awareness Month. Look for special programs in your area.
- ___ Have your parents prepare their taxes early. Schools may request this information as proof of income.
- ___ Request that your counselor send the transcript of your first semester grades to the colleges to which you have applied.

February

- ___ If you completed a FAFSA, you should receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) within four weeks after submitting the FAFSA.
- ___ Review the SAR carefully and check for any mistakes.
- ___ If necessary, correct any items on the SAR and return it to the FAFSA processor.
- ___ If a college received your data directly, notify the college of any change.

March

- ___ If you submitted a FAFSA in January and have not received your SAR, contact the Federal Student Aid Information Center at (319) 337-5665.

April

- ___ Make your final decision about a college.
 - ___ Create a timetable for payment of college fees.
 - ___ Notify the other schools that you will not be attending.
 - ___ Send tuition deposit and follow all other admissions instructions.
- You must decide which offer of admission to accept by May 1st.***

May

- ___ Request that your counselor send your final transcript to the college you will attend.
- ___ Keep a copy of your final transcript in your personal file.

July

- ___ Look for information in the mail from the college about housing, roommates, orientation, course selection, etc.
- ___ Respond promptly to all requests from the college.
- ___ Prepare for independent living.
- ___ Prepare an expense sheet for college.

MODULE 2: PREPARING FOR STANDARDIZED TESTS

Activity #37: Preparing for the FCAT

What is the FCAT?

Florida's Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) is given to all students in Florida public schools between grades 3 and 10. The primary purpose of the test is to assess student achievement of the high-order cognitive skills represented by the Sunshine State Standards in reading, writing, and mathematics. A secondary purpose is to compare the performance of Florida students to the performance of students across the nation. The FCAT is important because it measures student performance with reference to accepted, grade-specific standards. Students must pass the 10th Grade FCAT to be eligible for graduation from high school.

How Can Mentors Help Students Prepare for the FCAT?

PLEASE NOTE: Teachers have the primary responsibility for helping students prepare for the FCAT, but there are several things mentors can do to make teachers' jobs easier.

1. Many schools provide resources that can assist students with the FCAT. Ask a guidance counselor if there are any resources you can use to help your student.
2. Mentors of fourth and fifth grade students can use a computer in the school media center to access the Florida Department of Education web site: www.fldoe.org. On the home page, they can click "FCAT," then click on "Understanding FCAT," then click on "FCAT Explorer." (This site contains a great deal of information about FCAT.)
3. The FCAT Explorer is a comprehensive, interactive, instructional support tool that helps fourth, sixth, eighth and tenth grade reading and fifth, eight and tenth grade math.
4. The FCAT Explorer practice programs do not replace the classroom teacher's initial instruction and skill development activities; these programs reinforce this instruction via instructional games, skill practice exercises, and performance feedback.
5. Mentors can check with guidance personnel to determine if the school has The FCAT Simulation. This computer-based training software allows students in all grades the opportunity to take diagnostic tests, learn about benchmarks and test-taking tips, complete practice tests, and utilize many other valuable resources.

Activity #38: What is the PSAT/NMSQT?

Read over this material with your student and make certain he/she understands how the test is constructed and why it is so important.

What is the PSAT/NMSQT?

The Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test is offered to all college-bound students. All sophomores and juniors planning to attend college are urged to take this test for the following reasons:

1. Any student who wants to be considered for a National Merit Scholarship, the National Hispanic Scholarship, or the National Negro Achievement Scholarship **must** take the PSAT during his/her junior year.
2. Students receive feedback on strengths and weaknesses of skills necessary for college study.
3. Students can use this feedback to prepare for the SAT in those areas.
4. Students will become familiar with the directions and types of questions used in the SAT.

The test includes five sections: two 25-minute verbal sections, two 25-minute math sections, and one 30-minute writing skills section.

Verbal Section: The Verbal section has 52 questions:

1. 13 Sentence Completions
2. 13 Analogies
3. 26 Critical Reading Questions

Math Section: The Math section has 40 questions:

1. 20 Regular Multiple-Choice
2. 12 Quantitative Comparisons
3. 8 Student-Produced Responses

Writing Section: There is one 30-minute writing section with 39 questions.

1. 19 Identifying Sentence Errors
2. 14 Improving Sentences
3. 6 Improving Paragraph Questions

Activity #39: How To Prepare for the PSAT/NMSQT

1. Read over the following guidelines with your student.
2. Focus on the important preparation steps and dates.

When and How to Register

You must sign up for the test at your high school; the test is administered by high schools, not through test centers. Online registration is not available. You can learn about test dates by checking the College Board web site: www.collegeboard.org. Test dates are usually scheduled in the middle of October.

Fees and Fee Waivers

The fee for the 2001 PSAT/NMSQT is \$9.50. Schools sometimes charge an additional fee to cover administrative costs. **The College Board makes fee waivers available to juniors from low-income families. See your counselor for more information.**

How to Prepare

1. If you plan to take the PSAT/NMSQT in the fall, pick up the Student Bulletin from your guidance office in September.
2. Review the section on scholarships with your parents.
3. Spend at least 30 minutes studying the hints, tips, and explanations of math, verbal, and writing skills questions.
4. Take a few minutes to learn how to fill in information on the answer sheet.
5. Take the practice test like it's the real thing!
6. Use the College Board web site to look at sample questions.

Long-Term Preparation

1. Take a good selection of solid academic courses, read widely, and develop your study skills.
2. Enroll in the most challenging courses you can handle in English, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign languages, and fine arts.
3. Get involved in problem-solving activities through clubs, sports, and part-time jobs.

Activity #40: 10 Test-Taking Tips for the PSAT

Review these ten test-taking tips with your student.

1. Take the practice test in the Student Bulletin (the preparation manual for the PSAT, available in most guidance offices).
2. Learn the directions for each type of question.
3. Remember that questions are generally arranged in a section from easier to harder.
4. Earn as many points as you can on easy questions.
5. Read all the answer choices you can before marking your answer sheet.
6. Do your scratchwork in the test book.
7. Don't feel you have to answer every question.
8. Work steadily—don't waste time on hard questions. You can always go back to them later.
9. Check your answer sheet regularly to make sure you're in the right place.
10. Take a calculator.

Will Guessing Hurt Me?

Educated guessing means guessing an answer whenever you are able to eliminate one or more of the choices as definitely wrong. Educated guessing may help you.

Random guessing probably won't help you because of the way the test is scored. You can earn an above-average score by getting only half the questions right and omitting the rest. **Because you lose a fraction of a point for questions you get wrong, you do not want to guess on questions if you can't eliminate at least one choice.**

Activity #4I: How to Register for the SAT

1. Read over the information on this page with your student.
2. Make sure he/she knows how to obtain registration information for the test.

About the SAT

Many colleges require the SAT I for admission because it is a standard way of measuring a student's ability to do college-level work. Because courses and grading standards vary widely from school to school, scores on standardized tests, like the SAT I, help colleges compare your academic achievements with those of students from different schools.

How to Register

You can register online using the College Board web site (credit card required) or you can register by mail. To register by mail, you need to get the Registration Bulletin from your school counselor's office. A registration form is included.

How Do I Find Out About Test Dates, Test Sites, and Deadlines?

The registration form contains test dates, registration deadlines, instructions, test center codes, and other related information.

Test Day

Plan to arrive at the test center between 8:00 and 8:15 a.m. on the day of the test. Testing starts about 8:30 a.m. and ends about 12:30 p.m. You will get a short break at the end of each hour of testing time. Bring the following items with you:

1. Your admission ticket
2. Two #2 pencils and a good eraser
3. Acceptable identification
4. An acceptable calculator only if you are taking the SAT I, SAT II: Math Level IC or IIC tests

Activity #42: What You Need to Know About the SAT

You can use this page to give your student a good overview of the SAT: how it is constructed and the types of questions it contains.

What Does the SAT Measure?

The SAT I measures your verbal and math reasoning abilities. These are abilities you develop over time through the work you do in school and on your own. Your SAT I scores can help you and colleges better understand how you compare with other students preparing for college.

Verbal Questions Test Your Ability to:

1. Understand and analyze what you read
2. Recognize relationships between parts of a sentence
3. Establish relationships between pairs of words

Math Questions Test Your Ability to Solve Problems Involving:

1. Arithmetic
2. Algebra
3. Geometry
4. Data Analysis

How is the SAT Constructed?

The SAT I is a three-hour test made up of seven sections:

1. Three verbal sections: two 30-minute sections and one 15-minute section
2. Three math sections: two 30-minute sections and one 15-minute section
3. One 30-minute equating section, verbal or math

The Types of Questions Used On the Test

Three types of verbal questions are used on the SAT I:

1. Analogies (19 questions)
2. Sentence completions (19 questions)
3. Critical reading (40 questions)

Analogy Questions Measure Your:

1. Knowledge of the meanings of words
2. Ability to see a relationship in a pair of words
3. Ability to recognize a similar or parallel relationship

Activity #42: What You Need to Know About the SAT (continued)**Sentence Completion Questions Measure Your:**

1. Knowledge of the meanings of words
2. Ability to understand how the different parts of a sentence logically fit together

Critical Reading Questions Measure Your:

Ability to read and think carefully about a single reading passage or a pair of related passages

Three Types of Math Questions are Used on the SAT I:

1. 35 five-choice multiple-choice
2. 15 four-choice quantitative comparisons that emphasize the concepts of equalities, inequalities, and estimation
3. 10 student-produced answers

Activity #43: How to Prepare for the SAT

1. Here are a few tips and resources that will help your student prepare for the SAT.
2. NOTE: there are many books that students can use for more extensive preparation; some of the better texts are produced by Kaplan, Barrons, and The Princeton Review.
3. Have your student ask a guidance counselor about resources offered through the school.
4. Read over this material with your student and try to help him/her formulate a reasonable preparation strategy.

How To Prepare for the SAT

1. Students can obtain [Taking the SAT I](#) or [Taking the SAT II](#) from their school counselors. This is an excellent way to get ready for the tests. (These tests are good preparatory manuals for high school students).
2. [10 Real SATs](#) is a best-selling book that offers test-taking tips, strategies, practice questions, and 10 full-length actual SATs.
3. [Real SAT](#) contains full-length practice tests for 20 subject tests.
4. Use the "Getting Ready" section of the College Board web site. The College Board web site contains many valuable resources that can help students prepare for the SAT I and II.

Test-Taking Tips

1. Know the test directions prior to taking the test.
2. Easy questions are at the beginning of sections. Do them first.
3. You get one point for every correct answer; you lose a fraction of a point for a wrong answer.
4. Use educated guessing.
5. Don't feel you have to answer every question.
6. Omit questions you have no idea how to answer.
7. Don't make extra marks on the answer sheet.

Activity #44: Learning About the ACT Assessment

1. Ask your student to check with a guidance counselor to determine if the colleges he/she has selected require this test for admission.
2. If so, discuss this information with your student.

What Is the ACT Assessment?

The American College Test or ACT Assessment is another national college admission examination that consists of tests in English, math, reading, and science reasoning. The ACT includes 215 multiple-choice questions and takes approximately three hours and thirty minutes to complete. The questions are directly related to what students have learned in high school.

Dates of the Test

The ACT is administered on five national test dates in October, December, February, April, and June. The registration fee in Florida is \$26. Students can obtain a copy of the Student Registration Form from their school guidance office and follow the registration instructions.

Fee Waivers

Take Stock students are eligible for fee waivers. Information about fee waivers is mailed each fall to every high school. Fee waivers cover only the basic registration fee, including up to four college choices. Waivers do not cover test dates, test center changes, or any other fees. Funds are limited. To use a fee waiver, you must register by paper folder. **Contact your guidance counselor for more information.**

Test Day

Students will need the following on test day:

1. Test center admission ticket, if student is registered for a national test center.
2. Acceptable identification. Admission tickets are not acceptable.
3. Three sharpened #2 pencils with erasers. Do not bring pens or highlighters.
4. A wristwatch to pace yourself; no alarms allowed.

Activity #45: Preparing for the ACT Assessment

1. Discuss this information with your student if he/she wishes to take the ACT.
2. Ask a counselor for more information about preparation resources if your student wants extra help.
3. Use the ACT web site for additional information and resources.
4. Encourage your student to have a preparation plan for the ACT Assessment, which includes deadlines and things to do.

How to Prepare for the Test

1. Familiarize yourself with the content of the ACT tests.
2. Refresh your knowledge and skills in the content areas.
3. Identify the content areas you have not studied.

Test Preparation Resources

1. The Real ACT Prep Guide can be purchased for \$19.95. This online tool offers many resources, including practice tests.
2. Go to www.act.org for test prep information.

Test-Taking Tips

1. Carefully read the instructions on the cover of the test booklet.
2. Read the directions for each test carefully. Pace yourself.
3. Don't spend too much time on an individual question.
4. Read each question carefully.
5. Answer easy questions first.
6. Answer every question. There is no penalty for guessing.

Other Resources

PLAN is a pre-ACT test that many schools administer in the fall of students' sophomore year. Mentors can check with the school guidance office for more information on PLAN. PLAN is a comprehensive guidance resource that is highly recommended.

MODULE 3: PREPARING FOR COLLEGE

Activity #46: Ten Advantages of a Community College

The majority of Take Stock in Children students will attend a community college after high school. Here are a few key points you can discuss with your student to help him/her become aware of all the advantages of a community college.

1. **Individual Instruction.** Community colleges generally have good faculty/student ratios. Smaller class sizes mean more personalized instruction—students have more opportunities to ask questions, get to know instructors, and receive special help.
2. **Cost-Efficiency.** Students who attend a community college generally can live at home; this can save them a great deal of money.
3. **Personal Development.** A community college provides many opportunities for students to develop leadership abilities as well as scholastic and social capabilities in a more relaxed, less competitive environment.
4. **Flexible Schedules.** Most community colleges offer courses at various times to accommodate students' work schedules.
5. **Transfer Capability.** Community colleges offer university parallel courses that readily transfer to a senior college or university.
6. **Guidance.** Community colleges also have guidance personnel who are trained to address non-traditional students' needs and problems.
7. **Special Assistance.** Community colleges provide many special services for non-traditional students.
8. **Comprehensive Programs.** Community colleges usually offer a wide range of programs that enable students to select those that are appropriate to their interests and abilities.
9. **Technical Education.** Community colleges specialize in providing students with quality vocational and technical education programs.
10. **Convenience.** Community colleges are very convenient for students because there is usually one located within driving distance of home.

Activity #47: Questions You Should Ask About a College

1. These questions will help focus students' research and enable them to make objective and accurate comparisons of colleges.
2. They can direct these questions to their guidance counselor, to the college admissions office, or use the college web site to find the answers themselves.
3. Students can use the College Comparison Worksheet on the next page to record important information.

Questions to Ask About Your College:

1. Are there any special requirements for admission?
2. What test and what minimum scores does the school require?
3. Is there an admission interview?
4. How do I prepare for the interview?
5. How much does it cost to attend school for one year?
6. What types of financial assistance can I expect?
7. How selective is the school?
8. What is the ratio of faculty to students in most classes?
9. What sort of advisement and counseling may I expect?
10. What is the ratio of men to women?
11. Are most students entering directly from high school, junior college, or returning to complete their education?
12. What are the school's strongest majors and areas of specialization?
13. How many students attend the school?
14. What resources are available to students?
15. What extracurricular activities are available?

Activity #48: How to Compare Colleges

If your student wants more college information, have him or her use the "Finding the Right College" page on the College Board web site: www.collegeboard.com.

COLLEGE COMPARISON WORKSHEET

COLLEGE NAME			
TYPE (COMMUNITY COLLEGE, 4 YEAR, TECHNICAL)			
SIZE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment • Size of campus 			
ENVIRONMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban • Rural • Co-ed • Male • Female • Religious affiliation 			
ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadline • Tests required • Average test scores • Average GPA • Average Rank of student • Special requirements • Notification 			
ACADEMICS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your major offered • Special requirements • Accreditation • Student-faculty ratio • Typical class size 			
EXPENSES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuition • Room and Board • Estimated total budget • Application fee 			
FINANCIAL AID <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadline • Required forms • % receiving aid • Scholarships 			
Housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability • Food plan • Types 			
FACILITIES			
ACTIVITIES			

Activity #49: Preparing for a Campus Visit

1. Urge your student to visit as many colleges as possible.
2. Your student can get the most out of a campus visit by having a plan.
3. Review the information on this page with your student and make certain he/she is aware of the reasons for a campus visit.
4. There are two ways to make a campus visit: unprepared and prepared.
5. The first is simply to travel to the school, tour the campus, and then return home.
6. The second is to prepare for the visit by formulating a plan that enables a student to answer all the key questions he/she has identified.
7. Here are a few things that students can do during their campus visits.

1. **Contact the College Admissions Officer**

College admissions personnel can give you current information on all the major questions you may have about: admission requirements, financial aid, tutors and other student resources, and important deadlines.

2. **Contact Friends or Student Representatives at the School**

These informal contacts can answer more practical questions:

1. Are the dorms quiet?
2. Where are the best places to study?
3. Is there too much partying here?
4. Are faculty accessible or aloof?
5. Why did you pick this school?
6. Does it meet your expectations?

3. **Try to Verify Costs**

1. How much do food, tuition, and other items really cost?
2. Gather as much information about expenses as possible from college officials.

4. **Check to see if the college has a career development service.**

1. How much will your school do to advance your career after college?
2. Students need to ask for evidence that the college will help them enter a career.

5. **How will this school help me achieve my goals?**

Activity #50: Applying to College

1. Go over these general college application requirements with your student.
2. NOTE: Point out to your student that the college application process is not the same for every college.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED TO APPLY TO COLLEGES

Application Forms

Students can now apply in writing or electronically for college application forms. Many college web sites have easy-to-understand application instructions.

Application Fee

The average college application fee is around \$25. Some colleges charge up to \$60 and others do not have any application fees. This fee is usually non-refundable, even if you are not accepted. **Many colleges offer fee waivers for applicants from low-income families. If you need a fee waiver, see your guidance counselor or Take Stock in Children Student Advocate.**

High School Transcript

This form is filled out by an official at your high school. If it comes with your admission materials, you should give it to the guidance office to complete as early as possible. Some colleges send this form directly to your school after receiving your application.

Admission Test Scores

At many colleges, you have to submit SAT I/II or ACT test scores. Many colleges require admission tests because they are a standard way of measuring a student's ability to do college-level work.

Letters of Recommendation

Many private colleges ask you to submit one or more letters of recommendation from a teacher, counselor, or other adult who knows you well. When asking someone to write such a letter, be sure to do so well before the college's deadline.

Activity #51: What to Know Before You Apply to Colleges

1. Go over the "dos and don'ts" of the college application process with your student.
2. If your student wants additional assistance, have him/her visit the "Getting into College" page on the College Board web site: www.collegeboard.org. Or go to: www.c3apply.org.

Do....

- Read all directions carefully.
- Apply online, if possible, so you are less likely to make careless errors.
- Have someone read and proofread all parts of your application.
- Use your essay as a chance to show admission officers that you are more than grades and test scores.
- Include anything that makes you stand out from the crowd, such as honors, awards, or special talents.
- Review your high school transcript before you send it to colleges, making sure that it accurately reflects your courses, activities, awards, and grades.
- Make copies of everything you send.
- Keep track of when and where you send materials.
- Find out if the college accepts special materials such as a sample of your artwork.

Don't....

- Procrastinate.
- Lie or exaggerate—it will come back to haunt you.
- Leave out important details. For example, if you play in the school band, include what instrument you play.
- Get sloppy with typos or the application's appearance.
- Borrow ideas for your essays, whether from a friend or a web site. Your essay should be your own.
- Go way over the college's length limit for an essay. Admissions officers have limited time and lots of essays to review.
- Drop the ball once your application is sent. Write thank you letters to recommendation writers and call colleges to see if your application is complete.
- Be a pest. Contact the admission office only once or twice a month.

Activity #52: Using Internet College Planning Resources

Here are some college planning resources your student can use to do more research.

College Board Web Site

Students can go to www.collegeboard.com to use many excellent college planning resources. This web site also contains information on every aspect of college planning. It is highly recommended for students and mentors. Here are just a few of the valuable tools students can use:

1. Under "Find the Right College" students can use a College Search tool that will quickly identify schools according to students' personal criteria and provide students with pertinent facts about their college choices.
2. Under "Getting into College" students will be able to learn much more about the application process.
3. Under "Planning for College" students can learn the basics of college planning.

Other Web Sites

Your student can use the web sites listed below to access information on all phases of college planning and preparation.

1. www.c3apply.org
2. www.act.org
3. www.collegescholarships.com
4. www.collegeispossible.org
5. www.collegequest.com
6. www.collegenet.com
7. <http://www.facts.org>
8. www.takestockinchildren.org

MODULE 4: FINANCIAL AID

Activity #53: Learning About Financial Aid

Here is some basic financial aid information that you can provide your student.

Grants

A grant is money awarded to a student that does not have to be repaid. It is usually based on financial need.

Scholarships

Scholarship money can be awarded because of academic achievement, outstanding talent or skill, and/or financial need. This money also does not have to be repaid.

College Work-Study

Colleges offer students work opportunities to help them pay for college costs.

Loans

Loan monies are awarded to students on the condition that they be repaid within a specific time-frame.

Know Your Deadlines!

Students must learn the deadlines for aid applications for each school to which they apply—and do so early in their senior year. They can contact the financial aid offices of their chosen colleges to get this information.

Local Awards

High schools, churches, local businesses, and civic groups often sponsor financial programs that target talented and needy students from schools in their areas. Many companies offer assistance to children of their employees. Guidance counselors are an excellent source of information about local awards.

Activity #54: How to Apply for Financial Aid

1. A good way to learn how to apply for financial is to use the U. S. Department of Education publication: Financial Aid: The Student Guide.
2. This booklet is one of the most comprehensive sources of financial aid information: it will inform your student of the types of aid available and how to apply for them.
3. You can ask a guidance counselor for a copy of this guide or go to: **www.ed.gov/prog_info/SFA/StudentGuide** to look at an online copy.
4. As you go over this information with your student, you will quickly begin to understand what types of aid are available to him/her.

Using The Student Guide

1. Go to the following address: http://www.studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/student_guide/index.html or obtain a copy of Financial Aid: The Student Guide from your student's counselor.
2. Below is a list of the items covered in The Student Guide.

Student Eligibility and Financial Need

This is critical information. This section explains how "financial need" is determined and provides students with a reliable means to estimate the amount of financial aid they can expect to receive.

Applying for Financial Aid

Students will need help in order to understand how to use the FAFSA—Free Application for Federal Student Aid. This application process enables them to apply for any type of federal financial aid assistance. The quickest way to apply is to use FAFSA on the Web. Students can go to www.fafsa.ed.gov to apply and receive detailed instructions that make the process much easier to understand.

A "One-Stop" Financial Planning Guide

The Guide provides in-depth information about all forms of financial aid assistance, how to apply for them, and the conditions of eligibility. This resource is literally a "one-stop" college financial planning guide.

Activity #55: How to Calculate Your College Expenses

1. If you want to teach your student how to plan a budget for college, you can use the Bank of America web site.
2. To instruct your student on the principles of budgeting, personal finance, and credit, you can go to:
www.bankofamerica.com.

Bank of America Provides Great Financial Planning Information

The Bank of America web site contains a wide range of practical resources and information regarding personal finance that every young adult should know. By looking over this site with your student, you can teach him/her many valuable lessons about economic planning, especially the pros and cons of credit cards. Mentors can spend several sessions on this site with their high school students.

Activity #56: The 10 Steps of Financial Planning for Seniors

1. This page contains an overview of the process of applying for financial aid.
2. You can use it as a blueprint to keep your senior on track.

Many colleges require a supplemental financial aid application and may have early deadlines. **Know your colleges' requirements and deadlines!**

Gather necessary information to complete the FAFSA prior to January 1st of your senior year:

- Family income tax return
- W-2 forms or other records of money earned
- Records of untaxed income
- Current bank statements
- Current mortgage information
- Business and farm records
- Records of investments
- Student driver's license and social security card

3. **Submit the FAFSA** as soon after January 1st of your senior year as possible.
4. **Review your Student Aid Report (SAR)** very carefully when it arrives. Correct any errors and provide any additional information requested.
5. **Photocopy all pages of the SAR** and mail corrections/additions to the address provided.
6. **Send the correct SAR** to the colleges that request it. Most colleges will receive your SAR electronically.
7. Each college will send you an **award letter** that describes the aid you will receive at that college. If you feel that the aid is insufficient, you may request a review.
8. **Sign and photocopy the award letter** acceptance before you return it to the college.
9. If there is a **change in your family's financial status** after you have applied for financial aid, notify the college financial aid office.
10. Don't forget to **apply for aid every year!**

Activity #57: How to Search for Scholarships

Give this page to your student or access the web sites with him/her. Students should not pay for any "scholarship search service." Scholarship information is freely available to everyone.

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR FLORIDA RESIDENTS

Students can go to www.free-4u.com to get information about scholarships available to Florida residents.

FASTWEB

(This is a free scholarship search service, but it requires an e-mail address.)

www.fastweb.com

FINANCIAL AID RESOURCE CENTER

(Good information, but requires an e-mail address.)

www.estudentloan.com

FINAID

(A great "one-stop" financial aid site. Has calculators and many other valuable tools.)

www.finaid.com

COLLEGE BOARD

(Excellent, self-directed search resource)

<http://www.collegeboard.org>

WEB RESOURCES FOR THE COLLEGE-BOUND STUDENT

www.nacac.org

UNITED NEGRO COLLEGE FUND

www.uncf.org

HISPANIC ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

<http://www.hacu.net>

COLLEGE SAVINGS PLAN NETWORK

www.collegesavings.org

Activity #58: A Financial Aid Schedule for Seniors

1. Mentors can use this schedule to remind their students of important financial aid deadlines and tasks.
2. Cover this material with students in September and talk with them monthly about their progress.

SEPTEMBER—OCTOBER

1. **Compile list of Required Forms and Deadlines.** In addition to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)—which students must submit to be considered for federal aid programs—some colleges require additional forms such as the PROFILE or other institutional applications. To increase chances of receiving the maximum amount of aid, students should contact individual schools to learn what forms are required and the submission deadlines.
2. **Explore Scholarships.** Generally, students should research private scholarship opportunities one year prior to enrolling in college.

NOVEMBER—DECEMBER

1. **Obtain a FAFSA.** Although students cannot submit the FAFSA before January 1, it is worthwhile for families to begin familiarizing themselves with the four-page, approximately 100-question form. Students may obtain a copy from their high school guidance counselor, the financial aid office at local colleges, or through the Internet at www.fafsa.ed.gov.
2. **Begin Gathering Financial Information.** To complete the FAFSA, families will need documents that provide income and asset information. Refer to the FAFSA for a list of necessary documents, including W-2 forms and tax returns.

JANUARY

1. **Complete the FAFSA.** Families should be familiar with FAFSA and armed with most of the records needed to complete it.
2. **Photocopy the FAFSA and Submit Before Earliest Deadline.** Be sure to submit the FAFSA and other required forms before the earliest deadline for individual colleges. This allows students to receive maximum consideration for aid and minimizes any risk of receiving less or no aid at all.
3. **Notify Financial Aid Administrators (FAAs) of Special Circumstances.** Families should contact FAAs to alert them to any special financial circumstances that may affect their ability to pay for college, such as unusual medical expenses or unemployment.

FEBRUARY—MARCH

1. **Review Student Aid Report.** Four to six weeks after completing the FAFSA, students will receive the SAR, which summarizes data on the FAFSA and indicates the Expected Family Contribution. Families should make sure the SAR is correct; if not, they should make changes and return it to the address provided.
2. **Submit Verification Materials.** When students are selected for verification, they must submit federal tax returns and other requested information to confirm data provided on the FAFSA. Promptly submitting verification will prevent a delay in processing students' financial aid applications.

Activity #58: A Financial Aid Schedule for Seniors (continued)

APRIL

1. **Review Financial Aid Award Letters.** Families should carefully review each letter to make certain they understand all the terms and conditions of the award.
2. **Talk to the FAAs.** If families are unclear about any information on the award letter or concerned about the financial aid offer, they should talk to college FAAs to discuss the award.
3. **Decide Which College to Attend.** After reviewing financial aid awards, families should decide which college best meets students' academic goals and financial needs.
4. **Accept or Decline Aid Offered.** After accepting or declining aid offered, students should promptly return a copy of the award letter to the financial aid office.
5. **Alert Financial Aid Office to Outside Funding.** Schools require students to notify them if they receive any outside scholarships, grants, or financial aid from private sources.
6. **Notify Other Colleges.** Students should write to colleges that offered them admission and financial aid awards to notify them of their decision to attend another school. This will allow FAAs to redirect those funds to other deserving students.

MAY

1. **Make Final Decisions on How to Pay for College.** If there is a gap between the cost of attendance and the financial aid offered, families should research additional payment methods.
2. **Shop Around for a Student Loan Lender.** Most financial aid awards include federal Stafford loans. Families should carefully select a lender that offers interest rate reductions, flexible repayment plans, and top-notch customer service.
3. **Complete and Submit Loan Application.** Families often must complete a separate application to receive education loan funds. On the application they should choose a lender offering the most cost-effective loan programs.



SUPPORTING ACADEMIC SUCCESS



SUPPORTING ACADEMIC SUCCESS

INTRODUCTION

Mentors Provide Academic Support in Many Ways

"How can I help my student do better in school?" School-based mentors sometimes think of themselves simply as tutors because they help students with their homework, but there are many ways mentors can promote their students' academic success. Mentors are primarily advocates for their students. This means they should try to identify their students' academic needs and find ways to address these needs.

As a mentor, there are many things you can do to help your student academically. You can check your student's grade and progress reports to see how he/she is doing. You can also meet with your student's teachers periodically to see if he/she needs any extra help. Attending parent-teacher conferences is another way to learn more about your student's needs.

The tools in these modules will enable you to become a better advocate and facilitator for your student. If you use them, you will be able to teach your student to organize his/her time, find expert help for homework, and improve basic academic skills like reading, writing, and note-taking.

The Functions of an Advocate

Know Your Student's Teachers. If you can spend a few minutes with each of your student's teachers, you will be helping your student in a number of ways. First, you will send a message to the teachers that you care about this student. This may prompt them to give extra help to your student. Second, they can tell you more about your student's problems, needs, and tasks. Third, it puts your student on notice that someone actually cares about his/her performance.

Talk With A School Counselor. Every so often, you might want to speak with your student's counselor. A counselor is a great source of information about financial aid, preparing for college, and every other educational planning area. If you can develop a good relationship with a counselor, you will be able to learn about many valuable resources to help your student.

Monitor Your Student's Progress. By listening to your student every week, by checking his/her report cards and progress reports, and by talking with teachers regularly, you can become a positive factor in your student's education. If your student is doing poorly in math, for example, what should you do? Who should you talk to? How can you find a tutor? By monitoring your student's progress and talking with team members, you will be better able to identify and address his/her specific academic needs.

MODULE 1: HOW TO HELP YOUR STUDENT (ACTIVITIES 59-61)

The first module offers a few simple guidelines for learning about your student's needs and finding ways to address these needs. By communicating with your mentee's school, you will learn about various after-school

programs, extracurricular events, and organizations that would benefit him/her.

The tools in this module will help you get the most information possible out of a parent-teacher conference, learn how to identify your student's academic needs, and recognize your student's "developmental assets."

MODULE 2: BASIC ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS (ACTIVITIES 62-69)

The second module contains tools designed to teach students the basic organizational skills necessary for academic success. Colleges report that two of the main causes of poor academic performance among freshmen are inadequate organizational ability and lack of self-discipline. This module targets these two basic needs.

Your job here is to teach your student the first principles of time management. Successful students are able to manage their time so that they can have fun and do well in school. This module contains a few key concepts that will make homework and studying much easier for your student. If you can convince your student to create and follow a weekly schedule, you will greatly increase the chances that she or he will do better in school.

MODULE 3: IMPROVING ACADEMIC SKILLS (ACTIVITIES 70-82)

The third module focuses upon students' academic skills. These tools are simple exercises that will enable students to learn how to take notes, prepare for tests, get help with homework, and locate resources to assist them in specific subject areas.

As a mentor, you should focus mainly upon motivating your student to use the tools provided in this module. Students who can take good notes, create effective outlines, and who know how to study for tests will usually do much better in school than those who do not. The tools provided in this section will help students develop these all-important skills.

Building Academic Success Skills

As an advocate, you can help your student academically in many ways. First and foremost, you can motivate him/her to try harder. The importance of your ability to motivate a young person cannot be overstated. More young people fail for lack of encouragement than for any other reason. The best academic tools and skills are wasted if a young person does not have the desire and the drive to succeed. You can motivate your student best by praising even the smallest accomplishments on a regular basis.

You can also support your student academically by working on specific skills by using the tools in the second and third modules. One of the amazing facts about skill development is that even the smallest changes in a student's behavior can have a tremendous impact on his/her performance. Students who learn to create effective study guides may come to the startling realization that their memories and test scores have dramatically improved!

Finally, you provide support by constantly monitoring your student's progress. Checking students' grades, speaking with teachers periodically, attending parent-teacher conferences, and encouraging students to get involved in extracurricular activities are just a few of the ways mentors can promote a positive connection between students and their schools.

MODULE 1: GETTING HELP FOR STUDENTS

Activity #59: A Plan for Parent-Teacher Conferences

1. Mentors are urged to attend parent-teacher conferences in order to monitor their students' progress and learn new ways to help them.
2. At these meetings, try to learn about after-school programs offered by the school.
3. Here are some guidelines for using the parent-teacher conference to build a team to help your student.
4. The average parent-teacher conference lasts 30 minutes. If there are teachers, parents, a student advocate, and counselors present, you may have little time to ask questions.
5. Therefore you should prepare your questions prior to the meeting.

A Planning Guide for a Parent-Teacher Conference

Your Goals:

1. **Identify** the Nature and Extent of the Performance Problem
2. **Determine** Possible Solutions to the Problem
3. **Assign** Responsibility for Implementing Solutions

1. **Identify the problem.**

- Do we know why the student is not performing up to par?
- Does the student have a problem with conduct or attendance?
- Is he/she prepared for class?
- Does he/she do her homework?
- Does he/she have good study skills and habits?
- Does he/she pay attention in class?
- Is he/she motivated to learn?
- Have any changes occurred in the student's life recently?

Goal: The first objective of the meeting should be to reach a consensus about the types and causes of your student's performance problems.

2. **Determine possible solutions.**

- What resources can be used to address the source of the problem?
- What is the student's attitude about accepting help?
- Will the student follow through?
- How will these resources help the student's performance?

• **Goal:** The second objective of the meeting should be to determine the best ways to resolve the problems.

Activity #77: How To Construct an Outline

1. Creating an outline is one of the best ways to study.
2. Try to demonstrate to your student on a piece of blank paper how to construct an outline using this form.

Basic Outline Form

The basic form of an outline has main ideas listed on the left side.

Main Ideas  **Supporting Information**

- I.
 - A.
 - I.
 - a.
 - (1)
 - (a)
 - (b)
 - (2)
 - b.

Example of a Traditional Outline

- I. Main Idea: Causes of the Great Depression
 - A. Type: Economic
 - 1. Stock market speculation
 - 2. Margin buying
 - 3. Lack of regulation
 - 4. No checks and balances
 - B. Type: Agricultural
 - 1. Drought
 - 2. Poor land management
 - 3. Poor planning
- II. Main Idea: Effects of the Great Depression
 - A. Type: Economic
 - B. Type: Social
 - 1. Starvation
 - 2. Dislocation

Activity #59: A Plan for Parent-Teacher Conferences (continued)

3. Assign responsibilities.

- What do each of us need to do to implement these solutions?
- What things do I need to do to help solve the problem?
- When should we start doing these things?
- What is the best way to do them?

Goal: The third goal of the meeting should be to make certain that the parties responsible for carrying out the solutions are identified.

Benefits of a Parent-Teacher Conference

- The meeting is a good opportunity to offer to establish regular communication with the parents and the school. Ask the parents and the school liaison: "Is there a way I can contact you to tell you what I'm doing?"
- The meeting can determine what steps the student has to take to raise his/her performance.
- The conference may help resolve any conflicts between the teachers and the student.

Activity #60: Identifying Your Student's Needs

Here are a few things you can do to identify your student's specific needs or problems.

1. **Carefully Review Your Student's Report Cards.** You can get a fairly clear picture of your student's school performance by reviewing his/her report cards, both present and past. (These can be obtained from the guidance office.) These reports will tell you about absences, tardies, unexcused absences, suspensions, and grades. Many reports also include specific comments and recommendations by teachers, the most important of which is "student achieving below apparent ability." **Progress reports and report cards are essential for assessing the needs of your student.**
2. **Look For "Red Flags."** As you look over the report, ask yourself a few questions: Is there a problem with *attendance or conduct*? Is the student always *prepared* for class? Is adequate progress being made? Most important of all, are my student's grades what they should be? If you notice any "red flags," you may want to address these issues. Grades are the key performance indicators for your student. A "C" grade point average is considered "satisfactory," but is it sufficient for a college-bound student? "B" students may also be underachieving simply because they could be getting higher grades. **Strictly speaking, students who have below a 2.0 grade point average are underachieving, but this interpretation could be extended to "C" and "B" students as well. We want our students to perform at the highest possible level in order to be prepared to succeed in college.**
3. **Consult With Your Student Advocate and School Liaison.** You have reviewed your student's report card and have noticed a marked drop in his/her grades. The first thing you should do is share your concern with your Take Stock in Children Student Advocate. Your Student Advocate may then recommend that you ask for a Teacher Conference to address the question of your student's needs.
4. **Preparing For The Parent-Teacher Conference.** The parent-teacher conference is intended to inform parents about their child's progress and to address concerns about poor performance, but it can accomplish a great many other things with proper leadership. It is important that both the parents and the student attend this conference. Students need to hear that their performance might jeopardize their chances of receiving a scholarship or succeeding at the college level. Parents should be told what they can do to help their child succeed in school. (For more information about Parent-Teacher Conferences, see Activity #59.)

Activity #6 I: Developing Your Student's Assets

1. The Search Institute has identified 40 "developmental assets" that promote student success. These assets are great guideposts for mentors.
2. These assets are building blocks that support student success in a variety of ways, both directly and indirectly.
3. As you look over this list, you will see that, in nearly every case, an asset is developed through some type of connection among people.
4. For example, you can encourage your student to join a club at school; this enhances a "constructive use of time" asset.
5. The more ideas you have for promoting these assets, the more you will be able to help your student.

KEY DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS

<p>SUPPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Support Good Family Communication Other Adult Relationships Caring School Climate Parental Involvement in School <p>EMPOWERMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Involvement in the Community Service Opportunities for Youth Perception of Safety Family Boundaries Neighborhood Boundaries Adult Role Models Positive Peer Influence <p>CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creative Activities Youth Programs Religious Community Participation Family Time Likes to Read for Pleasure 	<p>COMMITMENT TO LEARNING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achievement Motivation Homework Completion Bonding to School Likes to Read for Pleasure <p>POSITIVE VALUES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concern for Others Integrity Honesty Responsibility Restraint <p>SOCIAL COMPETENCIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and Decision-Making Skills Resistance Skills Conflict Resolution Skills <p>POSITIVE IDENTITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self Esteem Positive View of the Future Sense of Purpose
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MODULE 2: GETTING STUDENTS ORGANIZED

Activity #62: 10 Time Management Tips

1. Quickly go over the material in this module with your student.
2. Your goal here is to help your mentee identify time-wasters and the best times to study by creating a personalized schedule.

10 Time Management Tips

1. Make a "to do" list every day

- Use a planner to keep your daily lists together
- Put the most important things at the top of the list and do them first
- Check off the tasks as you complete them

2. Use spare minutes wisely

- Identify all the spare time you have—riding the bus, waiting for dinner
- Plan to use this "downtime" to finish short, easy tasks
- Use downtime as a cushion to get ahead of schedule

3. Know that it's okay to say "no"

- If your boss asks you to work the night before the SAT, realize that it's okay to decline
- If you want to go to a party the night before a big test, ask yourself which is more important

4. Get more bang for your buck

- Determine when you do your best work
- Schedule your homework accordingly
- Avoid studying late at night when you're tired

5. Review your notes after each class

- Use downtime to review notes
- Use frequent reviews to avoid cramming
- Prepare for pop quizzes

6. Nutrition and Sleep

- Eat a good breakfast
- Eat the right foods

Activity #62: 10 Time Management Tips (continued)**7. Communicate your schedule to others**

- Ask your parents to cooperate with your schedule
- Tell your friends not to call when you are working
- Turn off the television!

8. Become a taskmaster

- Determine your work schedule first
- Allot times to each activity
- Schedule your recreational activities second
- Eliminate recreational activities that are not important to you

9. Don't waste time agonizing

- Do the hard/unpleasant tasks first so you don't have to dread or worry about them all evening
- Try to train yourself not to like or dislike any specific task—just do them

10. Keep things in perspective

- Set realistic daily goals
- Schedule breaks when you need them
- Adjust your schedule if it isn't working
- Stick to your schedule if it works for you

Activity #63: Time Management Assessment

Help your student fill out this sheet and decide how best to budget his/her time.

1. Decide how much time you need to study.

On the following lines, list your present courses, the grade you wish to attain, and the number of hours you will need to study each week to earn that grade.

COURSE	GRADE I WANT	WEEKLY STUDY HOURS

2. Determine how much time you have to study.

How much time do you spend doing the following?

___ Studying at school ___ Free time activities ___ Studying at home ___ Family activities

_____ Total hours studying per week

Do I need more time to study? Yes ___ No ___

3. Do I need to budget my time?

Do I have a quiet place to study? Yes ___ No ___

What is the best time for me to study? _____

Do I need to set up a schedule? Yes ___ No ___

4. What are the main distractions that I can eliminate?

Activity #64: Identify Your Time Wasters

1. Here is a simple activity sheet designed to help your student recognize "time wasters."
2. Time wasters are those activities that can be eliminated in order to give students more time for important tasks, like homework or studying.
3. You and your student can work on this exercise together.
4. As he/she writes down the five or ten main time wasters, you can do the same.
5. Students who eliminate just one time waster will gain more time in their day.

Time Wasters:**Things I Don't Need to Do Every Day**

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

Activity #65: Using a Daily Planner

1. Students in most schools are provided with planners that enable them to record assignments.
2. You might want to ask your student if he/she has a planner and if you could see it.
3. Here are some questions to think about when you look over your student's planner.
 1. **Has your student written down assignments for all his/her courses?**

Students who do not write assignments in their planner will probably forget about them. Try to make certain there is an assignment for every course the student is taking.
 2. **Do you understand the assignments?**

If you cannot make sense of the assignment, it is reasonable to assume the student's parents won't either.
 3. **Ask your student to explain assignments that appear confusing to you.**

If your student cannot explain the assignment to you, you can reasonably assume he/she does not understand it.
 4. **Ask your student how she/he will be graded on the assignment.**

Knowing how the assignment is weighted will give students a good way to estimate how much time they should spend on it.
 5. **Ask your student to identify the most difficult assignments.**

Have your student put a check next to the ones he/she may need help with.
 6. **Offer to help your student with the difficult assignments.**

Sometimes students are reluctant to ask for help with assignments. By offering your assistance, you are showing that you care and that you think the assignment is important.
 7. **Ask your student to write down the times when he/she will complete specific assignments.**

Use the worksheet in Activity #63 to record your student's homework schedule.
 8. **Use the planner to monitor your student's progress.**

Set up a reward system as an incentive for completing homework assignments.

Activity #66: How Much Time Should Homework Take?

1. Is your student spending enough time on homework?
2. How much time should students devote to homework?
3. We often fail to realize that completing homework assignments properly and on time requires a number of skills that most of us take for granted.
4. It is also important to note that parents and teachers can play a vital role in ensuring that students successfully complete their homework assignments.
5. The table below gives you ballpark estimates for the amount of time that students should spend on their homework.
6. The specific amount and frequency of assigned homework should be based on student needs, interests, abilities, and the content of the instructional program.
7. Mentors can consult with guidance counselors or teachers to get a more accurate figure for their particular students.
8. Ask your student how much time he/she spends per day on homework and compare this number with the appropriate figure given below.

AVERAGE HOMEWORK TIMES	
Grade Level	Approximate Homework Time (Minutes Per Day)
Kindergarten	15
Grades 1, 2, 3	30
Grades 4, 5, 6	45
Grades 7, 8	90
Grade 9	120
Grade 10	130
Grade 11	140
Grade 12	150

Activity #67: 10 Homework Tips for Students

1. Read over these tips with your student.
2. Encourage your student to do as many of them as possible.

10 Basic Homework Tips for Students

1. **Locate a Regular Study Area**

- Create a good study area with all the materials (dictionary, pens, papers, rulers) that you need to do your work.
- Make sure the area is quiet.
- Find a comfortable chair (hard chairs make studying less enjoyable).

2. **List Activities in Order**

- Make a prioritized list of everything you need to do.
- Don't use "I don't know where to start" as an excuse.
- Do the hard stuff first when you have more energy.

3. **Establish Your Study Time**

- Reserving a regular study time is very important.
- Students who work at the same time every day do their work everyday!
- Late night studying can be less productive because you have less energy.

4. **Use Free Time During School**

- If you have free periods during school, use them to get your homework done.
- If you have a long bus ride, try to do some homework on the way home.

5. **Avoid Procrastination**

- If you only do homework when you "feel" like doing it, it will never get done.
- Get homework done ahead of time in order to prepare for tests.

6. **Take Your Time and Do It Right**

- Don't rush just to get finished.
- Try to understand how the material relates to future tests.

7. **Write Down Instructions Carefully**

- Write down instructions in a step-by-step manner, if possible.
- Make certain you understand what the teacher wants.
- Ask questions of the teacher if you don't understand.

Activity #67: 10 Homework Tips for Students (continued)**8. Celebrate Your Achievements**

- Successfully completing homework assignments for a week deserves some type of recognition or award.
- Reward yourself on weekends for achieving this goal.
- Take pride in completing your assignments.

9. Plan Your Week

- Students who can plan their homework schedule will find it much easier to keep on track.
- Planning your homework a week in advance allows you time to enjoy special activities during the week.

10. Organize Your Information

- Keep things in perspective—how much weight does each assignment have?
- Try to recognize why the homework material is important—will it be covered on tests?

Activity #68: Homework Tracker for Mentors

Here is a simple format for a weekly homework schedule that mentors can use to help keep track of students' homework assignments and their study schedules.

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
4-5					
5-6					
6-7					
7-8					
9-10					
ASSIGNMENTS DUE					
MATH					
SCIENCE					
GEOGRAPHY					
ENGLISH					

Activity #69: Weekly Homework Log for Students

Give copies of this log to your student to help him/her record homework assignments on a weekly basis.

WEEKLY HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

Record Assignments Due and Completed

NAME		WEEK OF		
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Due:	Due:	Due:	Due:	Due:
Completed:	Completed:	Completed:	Completed:	Completed:

MODULE 3: IMPROVING ACADEMIC SKILLS

Activity #70: Using Online Skill-Building Resources

1. You and your student can use a computer in the school media center to access these skill-building web sites.
2. Students can also use the sites for self-directed learning.

How to Get Online Homework Assistance

1. Give these web sites to your student and/or work on them with him/her.
2. You and your student can also browse the web for additional resources.

COURSE-RELATED INFORMATION FOR ALL GRADES

<http://www.jiskha.com>

(This site is quite extensive and has many good tutorials in math and other subjects.)

EDUCATIONAL GAMES (GRADE-SPECIFIC)

<http://www.funbrain.com/kidscenter.html>

(There are many activities for students at this site.)

WRITING ASSISTANCE

www.powa.org

This is a top-grade instructional web site for students who want to learn how to improve their writing skills.

MIDDLE SCHOOL RESOURCES

www.familyeducation.com

Mentors can use this site to learn more about adolescent issues. Students can use it for academic purposes.

Activity #71: How to Take Good Notes in Class

1. Here are a few good tips to share with your students.
2. Students who take good notes in class have a much easier time studying for tests.
1. **Be Selective:** Do not write in complete sentences!
 1. Speakers average 130 words per minute
 2. Note-takers write at 25 words per minute
2. **Use Shorthand:** Reduce common words/phrases to symbols
 1. Learn/Use dictionary abbreviations
 2. Drop the last few letters of words—"approp" for "appropriate"
 3. Develop a code—eliminate connecting words
 4. Use "formula" statements
 - a. "The diameter of the earth is four times greater than the diameter of the moon."
 - b. "Earth= 4x > diameter of moon."
3. **Focus Upon Main Ideas:** Use "significance statements"
 1. Identify Main Concepts
 2. Explain Main Concepts by stating why they are important
4. **Recognize Relevance:** Is information new or is it covered in the text?
 1. Read class assignments before class!
 2. To listen effectively, have a working knowledge of the topic
5. **Write Down Questions:** Identify areas that are confusing or unclear
6. **List Any Examples:** Concrete examples often are the best way to clarify complex ideas
7. **Review Notes After Class:** Map Your Notes!
 1. *Group* concepts by category
 2. *Identify* connections among ideas and topics
 3. *Transcribe* notes into your own words
8. **Use a Note-Taking Format:** No need to organize material as you write (See activity #72)
9. **Have at least two pens/pencils for class**
10. **DO NOT MISS CLASS!**

Activity #72: The Cornell Method of Note-Taking

1. Students are not as likely to take well-organized notes on a blank piece of paper.
2. To remedy this situation, we suggest you give your student copies of the Cornell Form (see the sample on the next page). This simple format gives students needed structure so that they don't have to worry about organizing information as they write.
3. Walter Pauk first outlined the Cornell Method of taking notes in class – it involves the following form and process:

RECORD Use shorthand and symbols.

REDUCE Identify key words and information.

RECITE Repeat key terms.

REFLECT Know why key terms are important.

REVIEW Go over notes daily to avoid cramming.

Activity #73: Using The Cornell Form

1. Make copies of this form and give them to your student.
2. Read a page aloud to your student and have him or her use the form to practice taking notes.

MAIN IDEAS**EXPLANATIONS**

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WHAT I NEED TO REMEMBER:

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Activity #74: Learning How to Read a Textbook

1. Read over this "SQ3R" method with your student.
2. Use a textbook to enable him or her to practice each step.
3. Practicing these techniques each week will gradually help your student become a far more efficient reader.

Step 1. Survey the Text

1. Scan the table of contents
2. Read the title and introduction to the first chapter
3. Read the conclusion, summary, and chapter questions
4. Skim the main headings, subheadings, and boldface type
5. Read the first and last sentences of each paragraph (topic and transition sentences)
6. Examine charts, diagrams, and pictures

Step 2. Question: Reading as Searching the Chapter

1. Convert each heading and subheading into a question
2. Identify the relationship between main ideas and supporting evidence
3. Recognize connecting functional words:
 - **More of the same:** also, more, moreover, likewise, again, furthermore
 - **Change of ideas:** but, although, yet, nevertheless, despite, in spite of, however
 - **Conclusions:** so, thus, therefore, in summary, consequently, accordingly, in conclusion, hence
 - **Unfamiliar terms:** look up in the glossary or dictionary

Step 3. Recite: Reading as Discovering Answers

1. After reading each section, look away and recite your question.
2. Write your answer in the right hand column of your notes.
3. Write down unfamiliar terms in the left column.
4. Write definitions of unfamiliar terms in the right column.
5. Write down key phrases from the section
6. Repeat the procedure for each section of the chapter

Step 4. Review

1. Re-skim the entire chapter
2. Take five minutes to re-read notes

Activity #75: How to Assess Your Study Habits

Have your student fill out this simple questionnaire and circle the numbers that are important to him/her. This will give both of you a better idea of the areas that need improvement.

1. ___YES ___NO I never study more than an hour for tests.
2. ___YES ___NO I only study the night before a test.
3. ___YES ___NO If I study too much, I can't have time for fun.
4. ___YES ___NO If I study, I don't have time for anything else.
5. ___YES ___NO I study with music or the television on.
6. ___YES ___NO I don't have a quiet place to study.
7. ___YES ___NO I can't sit and study for long periods of time.
8. ___YES ___NO I often doodle or get distracted in class.
9. ___YES ___NO I have trouble taking notes.
10. ___YES ___NO I don't use class notes to study for tests.
11. ___YES ___NO I never organize my class notes.
12. ___YES ___NO I have trouble keeping up with my reading.
13. ___YES ___NO I don't always get my homework done.
14. ___YES ___NO I can't recognize the main ideas in a chapter.
15. ___YES ___NO I would like to read faster.
16. ___YES ___NO I have trouble writing papers.
17. ___YES ___NO I don't know how to create an outline.
18. ___YES ___NO I will put off difficult assignments.

Activity #76: How to Prepare for a Test

1. Have your student put an "x" by the actions that he/she normally performs.
2. Discuss the unmarked actions and encourage him or her to try these activities.

When preparing for a test, do you:

- Concentrate on what you don't know?
- Ask questions?
- Ask your teacher for help, if necessary?
- Make a test schedule?
- Create a study outline?
- Know what will be covered?
- Anticipate the questions?

When taking a test, do you:

- Get a good night's sleep before the test?
- Understand the test directions?
- Look over the entire test first?
- Make sure you know how much time is given?
- Know how much the questions count?
- Notice key words in directions?
- Do the easiest questions first and return to the unanswered ones?

Activity # 78: Strategic Uses of Outlines

1. Explain to your student the reasons for using an outline to accomplish the following tasks.
2. If you can teach your student how to construct good outlines, you will help him/her become a far more efficient and productive student.
3. **Outlines serve as superior study guides and organizing tools.**

Outlines are excellent tools for:

1. Organizing a Paper
2. Creating a Study Guide for a Test
3. Preparing a Report
4. Writing a Speech
5. Organizing Course Assignments
6. Planning a Class Project
7. Taking Notes from Textbook Chapters

Activity #79: How to Prepare for Essay Tests

1. Here are some tips for taking essay tests that you can share with your student.
2. Essay tests can be very difficult for students because they are required not only to provide information but also to structure it in a coherent fashion.
3. Practicing these techniques with your student will help him or her gain a great deal of confidence.

1. **Keep Track of Your Time**

If you have five questions to answer in 40 minutes, make certain you don't spend too much time on any one question.

2. **Read Through the Questions Once**

By familiarizing yourself with all the questions at the outset, you will have much more time to consider your answers.

3. **Identify the Directive Words**

Read the directions carefully and pinpoint the key terms. If a teacher wants you to describe, then do so; if she wants you to evaluate, then don't worry so much about description.

4. **Outline Your Answer First**

Whether teachers acknowledge it or not, they are greatly influenced by the coherence and structure of your answer. To list facts in random order makes it seem as if you do not have a clear grasp of the material. Try to organize your answers as well as you can.

5. **Take Time to Write an Introduction and Conclusion**

A good introduction and conclusion are essential parts of a good essay. They give your responses the appearance of being logical arguments.

Activity #80: How to Take True-False Tests

1. Students often get "tripped up" by true-false questions because they don't read the question carefully.
2. The key to doing well in true/false tests is to read the questions very carefully.
3. Read over these basic principles with your student.
4. Ask your student practice questions that illustrate these principles.

1. **Look for any word in the question that could make it false.**

If you can falsify an answer by providing a counter-example, the answer is obviously false.

2. **There are generally more true than false answers on a test.**

3. **Look out for extreme modifiers that tend to make a question false:** all, none, never, only, etc.

Once again, try to think of a counter-example that falsifies the answer.

4. **Identify qualifiers that tend to make questions true:** usually, frequently, often, probably, etc.

5. **Questions that state a reason tend to be false.**

Words that justify a statement — since, because, when -- tend to make the statement false because they introduce a reason that is incorrect.

Activity #8 I: How to Take Multiple-Choice Tests

1. Students need to learn how to take multiple-choice tests since this format is often used on standardized tests.
 2. Here are a few things students should know.
 3. Review each one of these principles with your student and have him/her explain why it is true.
-
1. Read each question with the intention of answering the question without looking at the possible answers.
 2. Use educated guessing. Eliminate two alternatives quickly and then decide between the other two.
 3. Choose the numbers that are in the middle range, not the extremes, when guessing.
 4. Choose answers that are longer and more descriptive, when in doubt.
 5. When two similar answers appear, one is likely correct.

Activity #82: Improving Reading and Building Vocabulary

Here is some basic information about reading: how we read, how to increase our reading speed, how reading is taught in the schools, and some tips on motivating students to read.

Increasing Reading Speed

1. As our eyes move across the page they make a series of jerky movements.
2. Whenever they come to rest on a word, this is called a "fixation."
3. Most people fixate on each individual word across a line of print.
4. In order to make our speed increase we must take in more words with each fixation, rather than make our eyes move faster.
5. Practice reading a book with your student.
6. Encourage him/her to use the following principles.
7. By practicing these seven principles, students will improve their reading speed.

1. Try to avoid focusing on every word.

2. Look at groups of 2 or more words.

3. Focus on the main words and meanings.

4. Work on vocabulary improvement: look up words you don't know!

5. Read for a set period every day: 15 minutes a day can add up to 20 books a year!

6. Practice reading faster and then slow down for comprehension.

7. Read as much as possible from different types of books.

What To Do If Your Student Has a Problem Reading

1. As a mentor, you are not expected to be a reading specialist.
2. You may be able to recognize if your student has a problem with his/her reading.
3. If you believe your student has a reading problem, contact a guidance counselor for more information about tutoring assistance.
4. Many students are not good readers due to a limited vocabulary. Teaching them how to use a dictionary can help.

Activity #82: Improving Reading and Building Vocabulary (continued)

Finding the Right Dictionary for Your Student

Teaching your student how to use a dictionary is a great way to encourage him/her to build a larger vocabulary.

- The right dictionary for your student is one he/she will use and be able to *understand*.
- Every student should carry a pocket dictionary, but such dictionaries may be incomplete and not have all the learning components necessary to increase comprehension.
- One of the best dictionaries for elementary and early middle school students is the Dorling Kindersley edition of Merriam-Webster's Children's Dictionary. This dictionary has many learning components that help students understand words:
 - Many pictures to illustrate nouns and verbs
 - A "How to Use the Dictionary" Section. This is a fabulous learning tool. You can teach your student how to get the most out of a dictionary by working through this section.

Ways to Use the Dictionary

- Your student should carry a dictionary at all times and have it handy when he/she reads.
- Have students bring in ten new words each week. Show them how to use the words.
- Keep a *journal* listing the words you have learned.
- Have a *purpose*: Link the new words to course topics and projects, such as: "new words about history," etc.
- Use your student's *textbook* as a source of words. Try to identify and define the key words using the dictionary.
- This is a powerful learning tool if you use it consistently.
- **Looking up just ten new words a day for a year will cost you about 5 minutes of your student's time per day, while increasing his/her vocabulary by 3,650 words!**
- Have your student write *poetry* or a *short story* using his/her new words.
- Have your student link new words to his/her own life.

CAREER PLANNING AND PREPARATION



CAREER PLANNING AND PREPARATION

INTRODUCTION

The Rewards of Career Exploration

Talking about careers can be a very rewarding experience for you and your student. Using the career exploration tools in these modules is a good way for mentors to get young people excited about the future and help them recognize education as a pathway to their personal success. Students will like these activities because they are fun to do and allow them the freedom to make their own decisions.

Choosing a career is one of the most important decisions a young person will have to make. Unfortunately, young people are urged to decide what they want to do for the rest of their lives before they have finished high school, even though they may not have the information, maturity, or experience necessary to make a good decision.

The goal of these activities is to provide students with as much information about careers and career requirements as they need to choose and plan for a career; however, we must remember that young people often change their minds. Students should try to plan for a career as early as possible in high school, but also continue to explore new career options as they mature. It is therefore very important that students return to the module activities several times during their high school years because their interests will almost certainly change as they get older.

What can you do to help your student choose a career? Students explore careers online using these tools, but mentors can add a key ingredient: real world experience. What practical information can you provide your student about working in the community? Does your student know what employers expect from employees? There are many, many topics you can discuss to prepare your mentee for a career: the importance of a good work ethic, being punctual, having a positive attitude, etc. You understand what it takes to be successful in the world of work—share this knowledge with your student!

Take Stock in Children has designed these career exploration resources to provide students with the information they need to make sound career decisions, yet the real key to successful career planning is the guidance offered by a caring adult.

Activities Make Career Counseling Easy and Enjoyable

Take Stock in Children has developed these tools to make counseling your student easy and enjoyable. The module activities can assist your student in all phases of career decision-making. The activities contained in the modules will help your student to:

- make **sound** career decisions
- devise **practical** career plans
- acquire **actual** work experience
- establish **realistic** career and life goals
- construct **effective** career tools

Another advantage of these activities is that they are self-directed. Students can work at their own pace, make their own decisions, and complete as many of the activities as they want. The modules are intended to complement each other, but do not feel pressured to complete every module activity or to follow a strict schedule. Let your student decide how fast and how far to go.

Career development activities are great learning experiences that will make your mentoring sessions both productive and satisfying.

How to Get Started

You and your student will work together on a computer in your school's media center to utilize the resources of some of the best career development sites on the Internet, such as Florida eCHOICES and Career Key. Students can work through each module in order or randomly. Students will use these sites to create their own customized set of career tools and planning guides. All they have to do is complete the activities online, print out the results, and place them in their career portfolios!

Take Stock in Children has designed four modules that correspond to the four stages of career development: self-assessment, exploration, planning, and preparation.

MODULE 1: SELF-ASSESSMENT (ACTIVITIES 83-92)

In this module, students can utilize entertaining, interactive sites to understand themselves better in order to identify careers that are best suited for them. Because young people change as they mature, they should be encouraged to use this module more than once.

This module contains activities that allow young people to:

- Discover their values, attitudes, and personality types
- Evaluate their skills, learning styles, and interests
- Match their personal characteristics to appropriate careers

Of all the modules in this toolkit, this one is undoubtedly the most enjoyable. Students will like these activities because they will learn new things about themselves. As a mentor, your main job here is just to work on these modules with your student and have fun.

MODULE 2: CAREER EXPLORATION (ACTIVITIES 93-97)

The second module assists students in exploring careers and gathering concrete information in order to make an informed career choice. This module offers students a host of sites containing up-to-date information about

their possible career choices. Once students have compiled a list of possible career choices, they can use the websites in this module to:

- Research occupations and career paths
- Assess career choices using personalized criteria
- Determine their main career paths

Mentors can help guide students in the right direction by making certain they understand all the factors that should be taken into consideration when making a career choice. The tools in this module make it easy for students to search a wide range of possible occupations.

MODULE 3: CAREER PLANNING (ACTIVITIES 98-103)

The third module will enable students to establish realistic plans for achieving their career goals. Exploring possible career choices can be lots of fun. At some point, however, your student should decide which careers he/she will seriously pursue. After they have chosen their principal career path(s), students can then begin to plan. In the third module, they will use planning guides to:

- Understand the career decision-making process
- Prioritize career goals
- Devise realistic and practical career plans

As a mentor, you have a number of key objectives in this module. First, you should try to make certain that your student's career plans are realistic. Second, encourage your student to have several career plans in case his/her first choice changes. Third, try to get your student to understand the requirements needed to enter his/her particular career field.

MODULE 4: CAREER PREPARATION (ACTIVITIES 104-109)

The last set of activities in the toolkit enables students to actually build their own career tools. Preparing for a career involves building the tools and gaining the experience necessary to enter one's career field. In the last module, students will learn how to implement their career plans by:

- Building effective career tools
- Acquiring necessary work experience
- Developing important job skills

After completing this module, your student will possess a comprehensive career portfolio he/she can build on through college or vocational school. This portfolio will contain the results of all the module activities that your student has completed as well as other important career information that will be his/her passport to success.

MODULE 1: SELF-ASSESSMENT

Self-Assessment is the First Step of Career Planning

Students who truly understand themselves—their interests, values, personality, and skills—are better able to make important career decisions! Proper self-assessment enables students to match their personal characteristics with appropriate career paths. The primary goal of this module is to help your student create a list of career choices and focus occupations to explore and research later, in Module 2.

These tools can and should be used many times by students. This module contains many innovative web sites that students can visit to learn more about themselves in order to narrow their career focus to occupations that correspond with their interests and skills.

Instructions for Using Module 1

STUDENTS

1. Complete as many of the tests as you wish.
2. Print out the results of these tests and place in a Personal Profile folder.
3. The materials in this profile will serve as the basis for the "Personal Information" section of a Career Portfolio.
4. **The list of career paths and focus occupations can serve as the starting-point for career investigation and research in Module 2.**

MENTORS

1. Schedule mentoring sessions in your school's media center.
2. Ask for assistance if you are not familiar with computers or the internet.
3. Go to the websites listed for each module activity.
4. Follow directions provided for each activity.
5. Each module activity is designed to occupy a session, but students can work through them at their own pace.
6. **The goal of this module is to generate a comprehensive list of "focus occupations."**

Activity #83: Using the Career Key

Description: This is a quick and easy way for students to **use their personality types to target possible career choices**. Students answer questions which identify their personalities in terms of six major types. Their top three types are then automatically linked to career information found in the Occupational Handbook.

Site: www.careerkey.org

STEP	CLICK	TASKS
1	"You" then select "Take the Career Key"	Student should fill out information and continue
2		Student should answer questions
3		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Print out the names and descriptions of the top three personality types your student has identified 2. Follow directions to create a job list for each personality type 3. Print out job lists 4. Follow directions to get Occupational Handbook descriptions of each job listed 5. Print out job descriptions 6. Put all materials in student's personal profile folder
<p>Results: Students should have the following in their Personal Profile notebooks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Names of their top three personality types 2. Descriptions of their top three personality types 3. A list of jobs corresponding to each type 4. Occupational Handbook descriptions of all jobs 		
<p>Discussion Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the identified jobs match your student's interests? • Does your student agree with the results of the test? • Does the test indicate a college or vocational career? (This is a key decision our students have to make.) 		

Activity #84: Discover Your "Personality Code"

Description: This is a simplified version of the famous Myers-Briggs test, the most widely used personal assessment instrument. Students have to answer a number of "either-or" questions about themselves and then receive a four-letter "code" that can be used to identify possible career pathways.

Site: <http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes2.asp>

STEP	CLICK	TASKS
1	Jung Typology Test Jung Career Indicator	Read and explain the instructions to your student
2	Do it!	Student answers about 72 questions
3	Score it!	Description of test results
4	Any of 4 different reports	Career Indicators will give examples of career choices and educational institutions for relevant training
<p>Results: Your student will now have a personality code that is universally recognized by guidance counselors and career development experts. This test is not intended to replace the actual Myers-Briggs, but it is a valuable tool.</p>		
<p>Discussion: Spend some time analyzing your student's results and look at the famous people who share his/her type. This can be a great deal of fun.</p>		

Site: www.personalitytype.com This site contains another easy-to-use personality test that utilizes the Myers-Briggs Type Indicators.

Site: <http://typelogic.com>. Use this site to learn more about the Myers-Briggs codes.

Activity #85: Self-Assessment

Description: Here are a bunch of personal assessment tests for students of different ages. Your student can print out the results of those tests he/she wants to include in his/her Personal Profile notebook. These are all fun tests that will help students learn new things about themselves.

Emotional Intelligence Quotient

www.jeannesegal.com

This is an interesting way for your student to discover his/her emotional characteristics.

Communication Test

<http://www.queendom.com>

This site offers a variety of tests to get your student to analyze his/her communication skills.

Activity #86: Personal Values Worksheet

Students can complete this worksheet and discuss it with their mentors.

Name: _____

My Ten Most Important Values

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Careers and Occupations that Match My Values:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

My Ideal Work Environment:**My Most Important Work Values:**

Activity #87: Know Your "Learning Style"

Description: Harvard psychologist Howard Gardner has proven that there are at least seven basic "styles" of learning and that each of us has a "privileged" way of learning. This is a very simple test that enables your student to identify the way he/she learns best and how to use this knowledge to make better career choices.

Site: <http://www.learning-styles-online.com> (Click "Learning Style")

Activity #88: Learning Style Worksheet

Ask your student to do Activity #88 "Know Your Learning Style" and then complete this worksheet. Help your student match styles to career choices.

Name: _____

Describe How Each of Your Learning Styles Affects Your Choice of a Career:

1. Verbal: _____

2. Mathematical: _____

3. Bodily: _____

4. Visual: _____

5. Musical: _____

6. Interpersonal: _____

7. Intrapersonal: _____

List Any Career Paths or Occupations that Match Your Learning Styles:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Activity #89: Learning Style Inventories

Description: Here are a number of more advanced assessment tests that older students might like. These tests are a bit more scientific, but can be more difficult to understand. If your student likes taking these tests, have him/her complete and add them to the Personal Profile. Learning style is a very important personal trait that can play a major role in how well your student fares in a career field.

KOLB LEARNING STYLE INVENTORY

<http://www.businessballs.com/kolblearningstyles.htm>

This can be of value to older students.

1. Print the one-page outline of the four quadrants.
2. Have your student circle the traits that he/she possesses.
3. What do these traits have to do with a student's career choice?

This test is a bit more abstract, but try to get your student to identify himself or herself with one of the four main personality categories.

FIVE PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING

<http://www2.physics.umd.edu/~redish/Talks/APSCent/sld013.htm>

A quick and easy test, but you have to do some reading to interpret results.

LEARN MORE ABOUT LEARNING STYLES

<http://www.oswego.edu/~shindler/lstyle.html>

If your student would like to learn more about learning styles, he/she can visit this site.

Activity #90: Career Interest Inventories

Description: Older students who are in a hurry can simply use these career interest inventories to identify career choices. Students answer questions about their preferences, and the results of the tests are then used to automatically link them to corresponding career paths.

Site: <http://icpac.indiana.edu/careers/inventories/>

STEP	CLICK	TASKS
1	"Career Interest Checklist"	Print out this page. It contains much good information.
2.	"Complete the Career Interest Checklist"	
3	"Continue"	
4	"Transferable Skills Checklist" <i>(on left side)</i>	Follow directions and take the survey.
5		Print out the results page.
6		Click and print descriptions for those occupations that interest you.
7		Put all descriptions in your Personal Profile.

Below are two other excellent sites for more career interest inventories. Print the results of tests your student wants to keep. The more possible career options he/she can identify, the better.

THE HOLLAND CODE

<http://www.csp.msu.edu/cdc/webport/ValuesEx.html> (Click "Interests")

The Holland Code is one of the most widely used ways for students to target possible careers. To see how the Holland Code matches personality types with careers go to this site.

CAREER INTEREST CHECKLIST

www.florida.echoices.com/ (Click "Career Interest Checklist")

This is a quick and easy survey of students' career interests.

Activity #9 I: Focusing Your Career Search

1. Your student has now completed some or all of the self-assessment activities and has collected the results in a "Personal Profile." Now what? What should he/she *do* with all this material?
2. Students should now have compiled a fairly extensive inventory of their personal characteristics, attitudes, interests, skills, and other traits. They should keep this material in their folders, for it will be used later to complete the "Personal Information" section of their resumes and Career Portfolios. (Students can return to these tests if they want to update the information.)
3. They will also have to refer to this inventory when they begin to make final decisions about their career choices at the end of Module 2.
4. Students should have a comprehensive list of career paths and focus occupations that they have indirectly identified by means of these self-assessment tests. It is now time to review this list and make any additions your student feels are necessary.

Focusing the Career Search

1. Discuss the descriptions of all the occupations in your student's list.
2. Identify those jobs (if any) that your student is simply not interested in.
3. Delete these occupations from the list.
4. Recommend occupations that are good matches for your student.
5. Add new occupations, with student permission.
6. Have your student rank his/her career choices in terms of personal preference.
7. Ask your student if he/she is satisfied and feels comfortable with the list.
8. Ask him/her if she would like to learn more about his/her career choices.
9. If so, go to Module 2 and begin exploring his/her careers.
10. If not, continue the program when he/she is ready.

Activity #92: Finalizing Your Career List

Before students move from self-assessment to career exploration, they should finalize their career lists. Have your student write down all the careers and occupations he or she wants to explore. (Career interests are more general; occupational interests are related to specific jobs.)

Career Interests

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____

Occupational Interests

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

MODULE 2: CAREER EXPLORATION

Career Exploration Can Be Fun and Rewarding

Students should gather pertinent information about their career choices before formulating their career plans. The primary goal of this module is to help your student gather more specific information about possible career choices.

Instructions for Using Module 2

STUDENTS	MENTORS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In this module, students will learn how to research and evaluate their career choices. 2. As students complete these activities, they can print out the results and put them in a "Career Profiles" folder. 3. The goal of career exploration is to gather the information necessary to choose the right career. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Go to the websites listed for each module activity. 2. Follow directions provided for each activity. 3. Your goal in this module is to help your student gather practical information about his/her career choices. 4. Ask yourself if your student's career choices are <i>realistic</i> and <i>appropriate</i>. 5. Does she/he have the information necessary to make final decisions? 6. Try to get your student to create a short list of career choices and begin to make practical career plans.

Activity #93: Career Awareness Searches

Description: A career awareness search is intended to reduce students' career choices to a short list and gather more specific information. Students can use any of the websites listed below to discover and add new career possibilities to their list. This is an excellent learning experience for younger students. Older students may want to bypass these activities if they feel comfortable with their career lists.

Instructions:

1. Students should browse the appropriate websites listed below to identify careers of interest and then print out important information: salary ranges, employment outlook, etc.
2. Your advice can be of great importance here. Many jobs sound exciting to a young person, but may in fact be quite different in reality.
3. For example, private detectives are usually depicted in a very glamorous light in the movies and on TV, but in fact much of their work can be very routine and unglamorous.
4. Use your experience to help your student develop a concrete understanding of what he or she will actually be doing on the job.

ADVANCING WOMEN

<http://www.advancingwomen.com>

Female students will learn a great deal about the challenges facing women in the world of work by exploring this site. Recommended for serious, older students.

SKILL SEARCH

<http://online.onetcenter.org>

Students can search for career information using various key words on this site. This can be a very productive web site for students who have some understanding of their desired occupational areas and their skills.

CAREER DOCTOR

<http://content.monstertrak.monster.com/tools/careerconverter/>

This site enables you to research careers by means of college majors.

CAREER CITY

<http://careercity.com/>

Have your student do a virtual job search to learn about occupations by location. Good for students who have a good feel for their career area and want to learn about actual jobs in different parts of the country.

Activity #94: Career Awareness Searches (continued)

CAREER PATH EXPLORATION

http://www.quintcareers.com/choosing_major.html

This site has very good information about choosing career paths.

Recommendations:

1. Have students collect all information sheets and put them into their "Career Profiles" folder.
2. Students who have completed Module 1 can pull out their career matches and begin to evaluate them based on the information they have gathered.
3. Students can return to this module many times to learn more about careers, but at some point they should begin to narrow their focus down to a short list of no more than a few career choices.

Activity #95: Career Investigation

Description: When your student has done enough browsing and wants to learn more specific information about careers, she/he can use these sites listed below to investigate careers and occupations in greater depth.

AMERICA'S CAREER INFO NET

www.acinet.org

Contains employment trends and projects, salary guides, career exploration tests, links to many career sites and search engine career pages. This site contains many, many valuable resources and is highly recommended for students who want the facts about salaries and employment possibilities.

OCCUPATIONAL HANDBOOK

<http://stats.bls.gov/oco/home.htm>

The Handbook has a great deal of information and is a good source for the student who wants to take the time necessary for thorough career exploration. Remember, however, occupational profiles are constantly changing. Advise your student that high-tech jobs are especially volatile.

JOBS IN INDUSTRY

<http://stats.bls.gov/>

This site has good information on careers in industry.

Recommendations:

1. Advise your student to print and save important information.
2. This information can be used later to compare career choices.

Activity #96: Occupational Profile Worksheet

Occupation: _____

Instructions: Students can profile their career choices by first writing down the name of their career choice above and then using the career sites in activities #94 and #95 to complete this worksheet. In the column to the right, put a plus or minus to indicate whether the information is a positive or negative factor. The goal here is to construct an accurate picture of a student's chosen occupation.

CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION	+ OR -
Employment Outlook (What are the chances of getting a job?)		
Competition for Jobs		
Salary		
Work Environment		
Qualifications		
Skills		
Required Experience		
Benefits		
Job Functions		

Activity #97: Evaluate Your Career Choice

A Career Interest of Mine Is: _____

This worksheet will help students determine their level of knowledge regarding their chosen career as well as evaluate their choice. Ask your student to write down his/her chosen career on the line above. Have your student then describe each of the items below insofar as they pertain to his/her career field.

Skills Needed for the Job	
How the Career Expresses My Personal Values	
Goals of this Career Field	
How this Career Matches My Interests	
Why My Work Style is Right for This Career	
Why My Personality Suits This Career	
What Salary I Can Expect to Earn	
Benefits I Can Expect	
Job Outlook	
Job Competition	
My Work Environment	
My Job Security	
The Functions I Will Perform	

MODULE 3: CAREER PLANNING

This module utilizes the career development resources of Florida eCHOICES. The tools available on this web site are state-of-the-art, interactive, and easy to use.

FLORIDA eCHOICES PLANNING GUIDE

www.florida.echoices.com (Log in and click on the "Planner.")

This is a great planning guide. Students will work through the easy-to-use modules to create a personalized action plan. These modules will not be difficult because students will already have the information necessary to complete them. This guide will also help them build their career tools.

Activity #98: Develop Your Personal Information Page

Description: The Career Planning Guide enables you to automatically create materials for your Career Portfolio. The first thing you can do is to develop your "Personal Information Page" that will form the basis of your resume and portfolio. As students mature, they can build and refine this section as they gain work experience and knowledge.

Site: **www.florida.echoices.com**

STEP	CLICK	TASKS
1	Student Sing-in "Create New Portfolio"	Follow directions on this page to create a Personal Information Sheet for your Career Planning Portfolio
2	"Creat Your Portfolio"	

Activity #99: Gathering Job Information

Description: The planning guide will enable students to take the information they have already gathered (about themselves and their career choices) and use it to make sound career choices. This tool helps students verify and finalize their choices by accessing more detailed, supplementary information.

Site: www.florida.echoices.com

STEP	CLICK	TASKS
1	Log in Portfolio Name and Password (if returning student, as listed in Activity #98)	Returns you to the portfolio created in Activity #98.
2	"High School Education Plans"	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use your list of focus occupations to identify jobs that you wish to pursue. 2. Find those occupations that interest you and print out their descriptions. 3. The job descriptions will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tasks: what you will do on the job Field of Work: general type of work activity Career Pathways: general academic areas 4. From the left-hand menu on the job description page, click descriptions for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Specialties and Resources" to learn more specific information about jobs and to find links for more resources "Skills and Education" to see the educational requirements and skills necessary for this job (very good breakdowns) "Interests and Aptitudes" lists the Holland and Myers-Briggs codes appropriate for individual jobs (<i>consult Module 1 to learn about these self-assessment tests</i>). "Earnings and Outlook" gives you the National and Florida earnings and job outlook figures for your occupation "Environment and Physical Factors" provides a very general description of the physical demands of the occupation. "Job Bank" to look at openings in Florida and other states. <p>Compare this information with what you acquired in the last module.</p> <p>Identify the occupations and fields that you wish to pursue.</p>

Activity #100: Learning About Job Requirements

Description: The final step in testing your student's chosen occupations is to review their educational requirements. Use the list compiled from the last session and print out the educational requirements for each occupation. Go to #7 to find out the post-secondary educational requirements of each job; go to #8 to learn about the high school requirements suggested for each occupation.

Site: www.florida.echoices.com

STEP	CLICK	TASKS
1	Log in Portfolio Name and Password (if returning student, as listed in Activity #98)	Returns you to the portfolio created in Activity #98.
2	"Education and Training Plans"	
3	"Continue"	Select an occupation
4	"Continue"	Print out educational requirements for each occupation.
5	"Continue"	You will now be on the "Suggested High School Courses" page. Click the career paths that match your focus occupations. Print the suggested high school course schedule.

Activity #101: Choosing Your Career

Description: Before students can formulate an action plan, they need to make final decisions regarding their career choices. Your goal here is to use all the information you have collected to make certain that your student's choices are realistic and appropriate.

Site: www.florida.echoices.com

STEP	CLICK	TASKS
1	Log In Area Code and Zip Code	
2	"Jump In"	You can also save your work by creating your own file.
3	"Continue"	
4	"Planner"	
5	"Career Goals and Occupational Plans"	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Follow directions to determine if the following career information is a good match with your Personal Profile: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational Requirements Transferable Work Content Skills Career Area (Interests) Personality Types Physical Abilities Work Hours and Travel 2. Print out information for each occupation. 3. Make a final decision about those careers you wish to pursue.

Activity #102: Developing Your Career Plan

Description: The goal of the first three modules has been to identify those careers that your student wishes to pursue. Have your student answer and discuss each one of the following statements.

Ten Steps of Career Planning

1. **My Primary Career Goal is:**

2. **My Secondary Career Goal is:**

3. **My Five Short-Term Goals are:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

4. I will attend:

Vocational School _____

College _____

5. I have identified the right courses to take in high school

6. I know my college major

7. I will need financial help to go to college

8. I understand the requirements and qualifications necessary to enter my career field

9. I know the types of skills I will need in my career field

10. I understand the functions I will perform in my chosen occupation

Activity #103: Advising Your Student About Planning

Description: It is wise for students to construct a career plan before they begin to build their career tools and plan their education. **A good career plan is essentially a statement of goals.** Here are a few things for your student to consider about goal-setting:

1. Make sure that the goals you have set for yourself are **your** goals.
 - Friends, counselors, parents, schools, and other groups can provide you with information and advice, but they should not choose your goals for you.
 - If you have completed all the self-assessment and exploration exercises, you should be ready to define your career goals.
 - **Make certain that these goals are really those you want to achieve.**
2. Put your goals in **writing**.
 - This helps you clearly identify what you want.
 - This increases your personal commitment.
3. Make your goals **realistic**.
 - Good goals are challenging and require effort, but are attainable.
 - Setting impossible goals sets you up for disappointment and failure.
 - Ultimately, you will have to decide if your goals are realistic for you.
4. Strive for **measurable goals**.
5. Major goals must be **compatible**.
6. Expect to **revise** or **alter** your goals.

MODULE 4: PREPARING FOR A CAREER

Preparing for the World of Work

Has your student ever interviewed for a job? Does he/she know how to construct a resume? Does he/she understand the importance of a career portfolio?

In this module there are many practical tools you can use to expose your student to the world of work. Most young people view a part-time job simply as a means to make some extra money. They do not understand that by working with adults in the community they can learn many important social and job skills they will need no matter what field they enter.

Students need to realize that an academic education alone is not enough to succeed in life. As adults, they must know how to effectively communicate and interact with peers, supervisors, and customers from very disparate backgrounds and cultures.

It is important that students gain the knowledge and acquire the skills necessary for their careers, but they also must understand the protocols of the world of work: how to interview, create a resume, gain work experience, and document their skills and achievements.

Building Career Tools and Skills

These activities will expose your student to online "tool builders" that will help him/her create an effective resume and compile a career portfolio. Employers look for several things in an employee. First, is he/she qualified for the job? Does he/she have experience? Second, how well will he/she perform? Has the applicant documented his/her skills and achievements?

Most employers screen job applicants based on their experience and skills, but they really want an employee with a successful attitude. As you help your student build these career tools, you should continually focus on those personal skills and attitudes that all successful people have: leadership, initiative, creativity, and, above all, the desire to be successful.

Activity #104: How to Conduct an Information Interview

Activity: Students interview professionals in their fields

Purpose: To give students direct knowledge of their career fields

Importance: Students can make better decisions when they have their questions answered by professionals

INFORMATION INTERVIEW

Make sure you cover the items that are most important to you—remember your Personal Profile? Salary is obviously a big one, but don't forget to factor in the value of benefits. Work environment is another issue you should address. Ask candid questions about job functions and skills, pros and cons of the career, and finally, does the interviewee like his/her work? Most professionals will give you honest answers and go out of their way to help you.

Students by now should have a clear idea about what is important to them. **Make certain that your student truly understands each of the following aspects of an occupation.**

1. **Salary.** Money is obviously an important consideration, but point out to your student the following:
 - Money is only one of many factors to be considered.
 - Many highly-paid workers are dissatisfied because they don't like their jobs.
 - What are the chances of advancement?
2. **Benefits.** Benefits are a very important aspect of any job and should be included with the salary to determine the real monetary value of an occupation.
3. **Work Environment.** Ask direct questions about working conditions. Mentors can be of great value here.
4. **Job Security.** Sometimes this is difficult to determine, but if an occupation has a good track record and long history, it may be a safer bet than a more recently created field.
5. **Pros and Cons.** What do professionals like and dislike about their jobs?
6. **Functions and Skills.** What are my actual duties?

Activity #105: How to Gain Work Experience

How can students gain real experience in the world of work? Ask your student to think about valuable learning experiences such as job shadowing, internships, and especially volunteer projects.

VOLUNTEER PROJECTS

Volunteer projects are one of the best ways for a student to build a strong record of achievement, community service, and leadership. Students who volunteer for a wide variety of community projects will be exposed to many different types of business and civic organizations; they will also meet community and business leaders who can assist them in their careers. **VOLUNTEERING IS THE EASIEST WAY TO BUILD A STRONG RESUME, FORM A NETWORK OF CAREER CONTACTS, AND HELP THE COMMUNITY ALL AT THE SAME TIME!** There are a great many sources of information about youth volunteer programs: your school, local Chambers of Commerce, civic and business organizations, etc.

Note to Mentors:

Volunteer projects are a "hard sell" to any teenager, but they are an even harder sell to teenagers who have lived in poverty all their lives. "Why should I work when I am not getting paid?" Try to convince your student that a small investment of time and effort can be a very important component of a resume and is valued by employers. For example, if a student has participated in community drives to recycle waste materials or clean up the environment, doesn't this indicate a good work ethic, a sense of community responsibility, and a good character? If you were an employer, wouldn't you believe that a young person who worked hard on community projects would work hard on the job? Aren't volunteers committed and dependable workers? The very fact that you are volunteering to mentor a young person demonstrates the importance of service work.

Activity #106: How to Find Jobs

If your student is interested in finding a part-time or summer job, here are some things you can do to focus his/her attention on key issues. You won't need a computer for this activity. This activity is optional because it involves asking somewhat personal questions. If you have a close relationship with your student, you may find this exercise valuable.

Using the Classifieds:

1. Bring in the Classifieds section of the Sunday paper. (It has by far the most complete listing of jobs.)
2. Have your student circle jobs that interest him or her.
3. Talk about the jobs:
 - What do you think they pay per hour?
 - How many people will apply for each one?
 - What do you need to do to apply?
 - How long before they will hire someone?
4. If your student wants a summer job, ask him the following questions:
 - How will you spend/save the money?
 - Do you have a budget?
 - Why do you want the job?
 - How can you build on this experience?
 - Can you get valuable references?
 - Can you return next summer?
5. If your student wants a part-time job, ask him these questions:
 - Why do you want to work?
 - Do you have to work?
 - Are you working just to buy "toys"?
 - Will this job affect your performance in school? This is the key question. Studies show that many teens do not do as well in school when they work part-time.**

Using the Classifieds to talk about work can have many advantages for both students and mentors. It is also an easy way for mentors to share their experiences and expertise with their students.

Activity #107: How to Apply for a Job

Your student should have clear, concrete long- and short-term career goals. It is now time to construct the "means," the instruments to achieve these goals. Here is a list of sites that will teach your student about the "protocols" and procedures of the world of work.

CREATE A COVER LETTER

www.myfuture.com

This site is a great introduction. Students can use it to learn the basic information about the construction and uses of a cover letter. Students who want even more information can check out this site:

<http://jobsmart.org>

Here you will find out even more about cover letters, their uses, their importance, and be given links to view cover letter resources on the web.

ACE YOUR JOB INTERVIEW

www.myfuture.com

Students will learn the ten basic steps of the job interview.

INTERVIEWING TIPS

<http://www.quintcareers.com/interviewing-dos-donts.html>

Some dos and don'ts.

Activity #108: Creating Your Resume

A student resume is a great learning tool. Students can use the sites listed below to:

1. Understand the basic principles and components of the resume
2. Learn about the three main resume formats
3. Use resume builders to automatically construct different versions of their resume

RESUME TUTORS

<http://www.umn.edu>

This is a great tutorial (provided by the University of Minnesota) that will teach your student about the different kinds of resumes, their essential components, and answer most of their questions.

http://www.jobweb.com/Resumes_Interviews/resume_guide/restips.html

This is another good tutorial for high school students.

CONSTRUCT YOUR RESUME

<http://www.myfuture.com>

This is an easy-to-use resume-builder that also provides valuable tips and clear examples to help students understand the process of constructing a resume.

Activity #109: Compiling Your Career Portfolio

A career portfolio is a very important collection of documents that your student can refine and use to advance his career. Refer him or her to these web sites for tips on how to construct an effective career portfolio.

CAREER PORTFOLIO PLANNING GUIDE

<http://www.glencoe.com>

Use this site to download a ready-made career portfolio planning guide. This guide provides you with a schedule for developing all the materials in your portfolio.

CAREER PORTFOLIO INFORMATION

<http://www.glencoe.com>

Click on "Developing Your Career Portfolio." This page is a good introduction to the task of building a portfolio.

Elements of a Career Portfolio

Here are some basic items students should include in their portfolios.

They can use the Personal Profile and Career Planning materials to help them.

1. Cover Sheet
2. Cover Letter
3. Title Page
4. Table of Contents
5. Introduction
6. List of Significant Life Experiences
7. Analysis of Achievements
8. Inventory of Interests, Aptitudes, and Values
9. Inventory of Skills
10. Personal Qualities
11. Documentation
12. Work Philosophy and Goals
13. Resume
14. Interview Planning
15. Work Samples







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