

Preparing for College

From U.S. Department of Education:

<http://studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/checklist.jsp>

Middle School:

Students

To Do:

- Think about college as an important part of your future. Discuss your thoughts and ideas with your family and with people at school.
- Start saving for college if you haven't already.
- Take challenging and interesting classes to prepare for high school.
- Ask your parent or guardian to help you research which high schools or special programs will most benefit your interests.
- Develop strong study habits.
- Do your best in school and on standardized tests.
- If you are having difficulty, don't give up—get help from a teacher, tutor, or mentor.
- Become involved in school- or community-based activities that let you explore your interests and learn new things.
- Speak with adults, such as your teacher, school counselor or librarian, relatives, or family friends, who you think have interesting jobs. Ask them, "What do you like about your job?" and "What education did you need for your job?"

To Explore:

- Visit www.FederalStudentAid.ed.gov/early to find out why you should consider college now and how to pay for it. The Web site also is available in the form of a workbook called *My Future, My Way: How to Go, How to Pay*
- Learn about a wide variety of careers at www.nasa.gov/audience/forstudents/5-8/career/index.html.

Parents

To Do:

- Use *FAFSA4caster* at www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov to find out how much federal student aid your child might receive. This information will help you plan ahead.
- Continue saving for your child's college education. If you have not opened a savings account, you can find information about tax advantages and links to state plans at www.collegesavings.org.
- Talk to your child about his or her interests and help match those interests with a college major and career.
- Help your child develop good study habits such as studying at the same time and place everyday and having the necessary materials to complete assignments.
- Stay in contact with your child's teachers and counselor so that they can let you know about any changes in your child's behavior or schoolwork.
- Keep an eye on your child's grades on his or her tests and report cards, and help him or her find tutoring assistance, if necessary.

To Explore:

- Get tips from the following documents:
 - [Helping Your Child With Homework](#) offers suggestions on assisting your child with successfully completing assignments.
 - [Helping Your Child Through Early Adolescence](#) addresses issues that parents of 10- to 14-year-olds generally find most challenging.