



**Discover The Possibilities  
“C”ing Your Future**



Mentor New York is pleased to be able to bring to you the updated Resource Guide assembled for mentoring program participants:

***Discovering the Possibilities:  
“C” ing Your Future***

The Guide was made possible thanks to generous grants from the Citigroup Foundation and from the office of US Representative Steve Israel (CD 2 on Long Island), whose ongoing support of mentoring has been invaluable. It was developed by Cindy Sturtevant Borden, a mentoring consultant. We would like to acknowledge Cindy for her efforts in producing the excellent guide, which has organized available college and career planning resources in a way that can be used and enjoyed by mentors and mentees.

For the past 12 years, the tool has helped countless of young people explore the opportunity to attend college. We hope that the tool, which has been recently updated, will continue to give young people who may not otherwise be surrounded by a college culture, a chance to devote more time to imagining their future and to see the possibility of going to college as part of that future. The activities that are featured in each section offer mentors an opportunity to address typical challenges to career and college planning. With the tool, mentors can:

- Open new doors and explore possibilities for careers that may not have been considered by their mentee
- Help their mentee overcome fears or false impressions about attending college
- Fill the void experienced by many youth for information and resources that can help them be successful in planning for college

We hope the guide will help you to help many students reach higher and aspire beyond any self-limiting beliefs so that they may realize their full potential.

The following Introduction for Mentors will give you an overview of how the Guide is organized and how the modules can be completed.

Sincerely,

  
Jean Lahage Cohen  
Executive Director  
Mentor New York

## Introduction

Experts believe that instilling the value of college and career skills planning at an early age can help young people, especially those from disadvantaged circumstances, prepare for and achieve their educational goals. The middle school years represent a unique opportunity to engage young people in discussions concerning their futures. Research suggests that the transition to high school has dramatic consequences for a young person’s educational and economic future.

The curriculum was developed to help you as a mentor navigate the critical time period with your mentee. As you work through the various activities together, your mentee will have the opportunity to explore a wide range of possibilities for the future with you as a guide. We encourage you to be an active participant whenever possible by **doing the activities along with your mentee**. You can then compare your responses and results with those of your mentee as part of the discussion.

The most important point to remember as you work through these activities is to move at the **pace with which your mentee is most comfortable**. You may skip some modules and spend a lot of time on others. That’s fine. These activities are to be used if and when you both find them engaging, thought-provoking and fun. ***New mentor-mentee relationships should enjoy the tool once rapport and trust has been achieved on a basic level.***

## About the Curriculum

*Discovering the Possibilities* is a series of twelve modules to be completed during meetings with your mentee. Each module follows a similar format with a number of sub-sections:

- Background – a brief introduction to the topic and its relevance
- Activity – step-by-step instructions for how to cover the topic with your mentee
- Tips for Mentors – special instructions or things to keep in mind (as needed)

The twelve modules are divided into three sections or categories that will help your mentee “C” the future.

### Exploring Careers: I “C” My Future

These modules encourage mentees to learn about themselves and to apply that knowledge to an exploration of possible careers. These modules should be completed in order as each one builds upon the results of previous activities.

### Preparing for College: I “C” My Options

The section provides an introduction to college, exposing mentees to new possibilities and encouraging them to fulfill their dreams.

### Building Character: I “C” Myself

The section focuses on building concrete skills that mentees can use in their everyday lives. Furthermore, these skills are essential for success in post-secondary education and career opportunities and thus compliment the Preparing for College and Exploring Careers sections.

The modules in the category are independent, stand-alone activities<sup>1\*</sup> and, therefore, they can be interspersed with the other modules throughout the year when they are necessary or

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\*Note: *What Can I Do Outside of School? Getting Involved* refers to the self-assessment worksheet. If you have not already completed the *Who Am I?* Module, your mentee will need to complete part 1 of the worksheet.

relevant to your mentee. For example, if your mentee does poorly on a test after studying very hard, you may want to review study skills using *How Can I Study Smarter and Stay Organized?*

Please note that some of the topics are more involved than others and may require more than one mentoring session to cover them. In these cases, we have included a natural stopping point. You may decide to complete the activity all at once (if time allows), stop and complete the activity at a future session, or conclude the activity. If you decide to continue the activity at a later time, make sure you start the session with a brief review of what has already been covered.

## Activity and Resource Guide

The *Discovering the Possibilities* curriculum has a companion *Activity and Resource Guide* which includes worksheets and forms mentioned in the curriculum. The Guide also contains a list of additional resources and optional activities organized by module topic.

## Tips for Using the Curriculum

*Discovering Possibilities* is divided into three sections based on the topic area. Except as noted above, **the modules do not have to be completed in order**. The curriculum is designed to be flexible. We suggest you develop a series of milestones to recognize and reward mentees as they complete modules. **The milestones could be based on successful completion of an entire section or on a specific number of modules**. Coordinators may be able to use group incentives such as an outing, a pizza party, and tickets to a special event, etc., so be sure to ask about this. Recognizing matches at year-end celebrations or creating a “certificate” of completion can also be considered.

The curriculum was designed to capitalize on existing high-quality resources around college preparation and career exploration. For this reason, many of the modules require mentors and mentees to visit various websites to complete activities. However, we recognize that mentor/mentee pairs will not always have access to the Internet. The modules listed below are completely self-contained within the curriculum and activity guide and do not require use of the Internet: *Why College? How Can I Get to College? (Making a Plan)*\*\*

In addition to these two modules, many of the other modules can also be completed offline if the documents are downloaded beforehand. If you know the internet access at the school is inconsistent, you may want to have printed copies of the materials available for your mentors.

## Using the “Ticket to Success” Achievement Chart ([see chart and ticket files at end](#))

Use the Ticket to Success as a visual tool to keep track of progress or to set milestones to celebrate and acknowledge participation. The tool can help mentors make associations between completing the information and how that can impact their mentees’ future. It can also be used in some way to encourage friendly competition or progress.

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\*\* The module marked with an \* can also be completed online for mentors and mentees who prefer an online setting.

# EXPLORING CAREERS: I “C” MY FUTURE

## WHAT ARE MY DREAMS?

### Background

By 2020, 65 percent of all jobs in the economy will require post-secondary education and training beyond high school. <sup>1</sup>

The goal of the session is to get your mentee really thinking about the benefits of going to college.

### Activity

1. Ask your mentee to think about what they want their life to be like in 10 years.
2. Explain to them that they will be creating a “story board” of their life in the future. Using magazines, ask your mentee to tear out pictures that represent their vision for the future. You may need to prompt them with additional questions such as: where do you want to live? what do you want to become? what do you want to have?, etc.
3. Once they have a number of images, they should begin to lay them out on poster board eliminating those that are no longer relevant.
4. Now, ask them to glue the images on the poster board. They should also feel free to add text or writing if they want to.
5. When the board is finished, ask your mentee to explain what each of the images represents to them. Pay attention to their lifestyle preferences, values, and interests as these topics will come up again later in the curriculum.
6. Explain that over the course of the school year, you’ll be doing a number of activities together to help them start thinking about their future and how to get there. You will be there to help and guide them as they learn more about themselves: their interests, skills and hopes for the future.
7. Now ask how they plan to get that life. Have they thought about what to do after high school? Have they thought about going to college? Why or why not? Make a list of their answers and keep it for future use.



*(Look for the “Spark” image in future sections that will prompt you to look back at the vision board and add to it or expand it as new interests and goals are discovered.)*

**If time allows, continue with the next section of the activity, otherwise STOP HERE.**

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<sup>1</sup> [https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Recovery2020.ES\\_Web\\_.pdf](https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Recovery2020.ES_Web_.pdf), Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce

1. Review your mentee's list of reasons why they have thought about going to college and ask them to think about why anyone would go to college.
2. Explain that while there are many reasons people choose to go to college, they tend to fall into the following categories:
  - a. Economic
  - b. Personal growth
  - c. Social
3. Review the reasons listed on the *Reasons for Attending College worksheet (Page 23: Resource Guide)* and compare them to the list generated by your mentee, adding their reasons to the list as necessary.
4. Ask your mentee to rank the reasons in order of their importance to them with 1 being the most important reason.
5. Encourage your mentee to take these ideas home and discuss them with their parents/guardians. Your mentee and their parents should make a list of any questions or concerns and they should bring them to the next session.

### **Tips for Mentors**

The vision board activity is designed to help mentees start thinking about the future in a creative and safe way. However, some mentees may prefer to express themselves verbally instead. If this is true for your mentee, you can replace the vision board activity (steps 1 – 5) with a discussion about the future. Begin by asking your mentee to imagine their life in 10 years. What will it be like? It's okay if they talk about family, friends, etc. but if they don't bring it up ask what kind of job they think they'll be doing? Spend a few minutes discussing what they want their life to be like and then move on to step 6 and complete the rest of the activity.

Be prepared – some mentees may have never thought about college. Others may have negative ideas about it from family/friends, etc. Your job is to introduce the idea and provide a place where the mentee can explore it in a positive way. Do not impose your values or judge the mentee (or their family) if they do not value college in the same way you do. Your job is to help explain why college can be valuable and to encourage your mentee to consider it.

# WHO AM I? SELF AWARENESS AND ASSESSMENT

## Background

Adolescence is a time of self-discovery and exploration. During this time, many young people struggle to find themselves and lack the resources to navigate the process effectively. As a mentor you can encourage and support your mentee as they learn to define them and assist in identifying useful resources.

The goal of the session is to help your mentee identify their interests, skills, and values as the foundation for career exploration.

## Activity

1. Ask your mentee to think about someone they know (family member, teacher, friend) who has a job. Does the person enjoy their job? Why or why not? What does your mentee think is important when choosing a career?
2. Explain to your mentee, that before they start thinking about a career, it's important that they know and understand their:
  - Interests (what you like)
  - Skills (what you are good at)
  - Needs & Wants (your values and preferences)
3. Ask your mentee to complete Part 1 of the *Self-Assessment* worksheet (Page 29: Resource Guide) emphasizing to them that there are no right or wrong answers. When they are finished review the worksheet and discuss the responses.
4. Explain that now that you have a basic understanding of their interests, skills, and needs, you'll be using a few activities to learn more. Go to [www.learnmoreindiana.org](http://www.learnmoreindiana.org) and go to the on "Career" section. In this section you will click on "Research Careers." Your mentee will be able to check the activities that are available to explore their interest. They can also take a Personality Quiz when you click on "Personality Style" to receive their Meyers-Briggs code, which is a series of four questions that give five possible career paths.
5. Explain to your mentee that the Meyers-Brigg code represents a system that will help match their interests with occupations. Record their code on part 2 of the Self-Assessment Worksheet (Page 30: Resource Guide). If your mentee disagrees with the results, or is eager to take the assessment again, visit one of the sites listed under *Additional Resources* (Page 39: Resource Guide.) and have them take a different assessment and compare the results.
6. For more career quizzes please feel free to check out:  
<https://www.princetonreview.com/quiz/career-quiz>  
<http://www.opencolleges.edu.au/careers/career-quiz/questions/2>

**If time allows, continue with the next section of the activity, otherwise STOP HERE.**

1. Explain that now that you have a good understanding of their interests, it's time to look at the abilities or skills.
2. For the activity on part 2 of the *Self-Assessment Worksheet* (Page 30: Resource Guide). Your mentee will have to rate their abilities in five broad skill areas: communication, research & planning, human relations, organization/management/leadership, and work survival. The results will allow them to identify the strongest and weakest areas. The transferable skills survey can be found there <http://d.umn.edu/career-internship-services/career-handbook/transferable-skills>
3. Record the results in part 2 of the *Self-Assessment* worksheet (Page 30: Resource Guide.)

The final step is to have your mentee identify the things that are most and least important to them in an occupation. Using the *Career Needs and Wants* worksheet (Page 31: Resource Guide), ask your mentee to review the 10 needs/wants listed (e.g. money, freedom, challenge) and choose the two that are most important to them and the two that are least important to themselves. Record their choices on the *Self-Assessment* worksheet (Page 29: Resource Guide.)

4. Ask your mentee if they feel like they know more about them and the kinds of things they should be looking for in a career. Explain that the information in the worksheet will help the two of you as you explore possible careers together. If possible, make a copy of the Worksheet for your mentee to take home and share with the family.

### **Tips for Mentors**

When you ask your mentee what they think is important when choosing a career, be prepared to hear a variety of answers. Try to connect each answer to one of the three categories discussed in the session: Interests, Skills, or Needs & Wants. For example, if “having fun” is important to your mentee, then they should pay special attention to the interests when exploring possible careers.

You may want to take one or two of the assessments yourself and then compare your results with your mentee's results. You could then talk about the similarities and differences and how you both feel about the results.

Finally, it's important to remember that the purpose of these assessments is to provide insight and guidance, but they are just one part of the career exploration process. Your mentee's interests and skills may change over time and that's okay.

## WHAT CAREERS MATCH MY INTERESTS?

### Background

If you ask a group of people how they ended up in their current occupations, chances are that several of them will say they just accidentally “fell” into it. The approach may work for some people, but for many the result is an occupation that they don’t like, aren’t good at, or both. There are a number of factors that contribute to job satisfaction including enjoying your work, having the skills to do it well, and feeling that it coincides with your personal values. Taking the time to identify careers that match your interests, skills, and values increases the likelihood of finding a career that fits you.

The goal of the session is to develop a list of possible careers and occupations that match your mentee’s interests, skills and values.

### Activity

1. Explain to your mentee that you are going to use the results of the various assessments and the *Self-Assessment* worksheet to identify various occupations that might be a good fit for them.
2. Have your mentee complete the *Defining Work Terms worksheet* (Page 32: Resource Guide) then discuss the answers. While many people use the terms interchangeably, what you will be exploring with them are occupations that match their unique interest.
3. Visit CareerShip®<sup>4</sup> (<http://www.mappingyourfuture.org/planyourcareer/careership>) and click on “Match My Career Interest.” Have your mentee click on the three categories that match their interest.
4. The site will deliver an extensive list of occupations that match their interests. You may want to start by reading through the list first. Then your mentee can go back and click on the occupations that interest them.
5. When they find an occupation that interests them, they should add it to the *Careers that Match My Interests* chart (Page 33: Resource Guide) and fill in the details.
6. Encourage your mentee to continue exploring occupations and adding them to the chart. As they create the list they should note in the “Learn More” column those occupations that are most appealing so you can explore them in depth together.

### Tips for Mentors

Remember, your mentee does not have to decide on a career today, tomorrow, or this year. The idea is to encourage them to explore the many possibilities that exist. They may change their mind many times over the school year (and their lifetime) and that is okay. Career exploration is a journey, not a destination and they should enjoy it. Feel free to share stories of your own, both good and bad, to reinforce these ideas.



#### **SPARK a Conversation!**

*How Does the Activity  
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<sup>4</sup> CareerShip® is a free online career exploration adventure for middle and high school students. CareerShip is a product of [Mapping Your Future](http://www.mappingyourfuture.org), a public-service website providing free career, college, financial aid, and money management information and services.

## HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE? RESEARCHING CAREERS

### Background

Think back to when you were first exploring career options as an adolescent or young adult. What kind of information was available and how did you access it? For many of us, our knowledge about the kinds of careers available was primarily based on the jobs of people we knew and media portrayals. Our access to information about careers was also limited to the hard copy resources at the local library or career center. The former may still be true for young people today, especially those from disadvantaged neighborhoods. However, in the information age the lack of available information no longer applies. Unfortunately, many young people do not know how to access the wealth of available resources or how to assess their relative value.

The goal of the session is to demonstrate to your mentee how to research occupations that interest them.

### Activity

1. Review the *Careers that Match My Interests* chart (Page 33: Resource Guide.) If your mentee has not already selected the occupations that they want to learn more about they should do so now.
2. Use the *Exploring Occupations In-Depth* worksheet (Page 34: Resource Guide) to guide the process of exploring occupations. Make copies of the form for each occupation you want to explore and use the time to have fun learning about different jobs.
3. Go to <https://www.bls.gov/k12/content/students/careers/career-exploration.htm> to find out if the occupation (or something similar) is included in the Bureau of Labor Statistics website for kids. If so, click on the occupation to get an overview that addresses the questions below and record the answers. If not, skip to the next step.
  - What is the job like?
  - How do you get ready?
  - How much does the job pay?
  - How many jobs are there?
  - What about the future?
  - Are there other jobs like this?
  - Where can you find out more information?
4. Help your mentee identify other resources for information. Do they know anyone who currently has that occupation? Do you? If possible, set up a telephone interview with that person so your mentee can ask questions. Is there a nearby site (e.g. office, warehouse, hospital) that they can visit to see the working conditions and daily tasks? Can they take a virtual tour of the career on a professional association website?

### Tips for Mentors

Be creative when identifying resources (people, places, etc.) for your mentee. Remember to use your networks including college alumni groups, professional associations, and fraternal organizations. Don't limit yourself. For example, if your mentee wants to be a doctor and you don't know anyone personally in the medical field, consider asking your doctor if they would be willing to speak to your mentee. If you're having trouble identifying resources for a particular occupation, involve your mentee in your search so they can learn from your example.

You should only research one occupation per session. If your mentee wants to explore three or four occupations you can spread them out over time, or after you have researched the first one together, encourage them to do the others on their own and share the results with you.

While the session encourages your mentee to choose only a few occupations to research in depth, it's important to stress that they do not have to decide exactly what they want to do yet. As new careers interest them, they should continue to investigate them.

# PREPARING FOR COLLEGE: I “C” MY OPTIONS

## IS COLLEGE FOR ME?

### Background

For many young people, particularly those whose families do not have a history of higher education, the idea of college seems daunting and unrealistic. Because of that, these students often lack knowledge about college including the application and admission process. They may believe a number of “myths” about college and its relevance to their lives. For those who do not know anyone who has attended college, the entire process is confusing and mysterious. In addition, some of these young people may have friends or family members who discourage them from attending college for any number of reasons including costs, uncertainty about the unknown, and fear of being left behind.

The goal of the session is to help your mentee see college as a realistic option by addressing any concerns they (or their family) may have.

### Activity

1. Ask your mentee to share the list of questions/concerns about college that they and their family developed. Use the list, along with any reasons the mentee identified in the last session, to develop key areas or categories of concern. Categories might include: cost, need for mentee to help family, grades, too soon to think about it, nobody in family has gone and they are doing well (i.e. not necessary), child not ready, etc.
2. Acknowledge your mentee’s and their family’s concerns and explain that together you are going to find out more to answer these questions.
3. Play the myth-busting game (see *Going to College – Myth vs. Reality* ([Page 24: Resource Guide.](#)) You and your mentee should take turns drawing cards and deciding if the statement is myth or fact. Once you’ve decided, turn the card over to read more information about the topic.
4. When you finish go to [www.knowhow2go.com](http://www.knowhow2go.com) and take the College Quiz in the middle and high school students section. Discuss the answers as you go.
5. End the session with motivational success stories or quotations which can be found in the videos or inspiration sections at [www.firstinthefamily.org](http://www.firstinthefamily.org).

### Tips for Mentors

One question or concern that will most likely come up is cost: how can I pay for college? Cost and financial aid are addressed in the myth-busting at the most basic level. When that issue first comes up, ask your mentee if they would like to learn more about financial aid. If so, there is another activity you can do together - check out the *How Will I Pay for College?* Module at the end of the section.

Visit [www.firstinthefamily.org](http://www.firstinthefamily.org) before you cover the topic with your mentee. View the videos and read the quotations and decide which ones are most relevant to your mentee and the challenges they face. Feel free to use other sources as well, the goal is to find something that will resonate with your mentee!

## WHAT IS COLLEGE LIKE?

### Background

Most middle school students are focused on the present – family, friends, school, and other obligations that keep them busy. If they do think about the future – high school is probably as far ahead as they'll get. Few of these young people have a real sense of what college life is like, making it even harder for them to picture themselves there in a few years. College seems very far away and unless they know someone who has been there recently, their ideas of what college is like may be based on media portrayals (e.g. television and movies). The picture of college presented is often very narrow focusing on four-year colleges and universities. Expanding the image of college to include technical schools and community colleges opens up a world of opportunities for young people to explore.

The goal of the session is to introduce the many types of post-secondary educational opportunities available and to expose your mentee to a typical college campus.

### Activity

1. Brainstorm with your mentee about what they think college is like. Encourage them to think about it in a variety of perspectives including the physical campus (size, location, etc.) the people (students, faculty, etc.), daily life (activities, dorms, etc.), and academics (majors, degrees offered, etc.).
2. Explain to them that there are many different types of colleges to meet the needs of the many different kinds of people.
3. Go to <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/prepare-for-college/choosing-schools/types> and review the kinds of schools listed:
  - Public vs. private
  - Four year colleges and universities
  - Two year community colleges
  - Career, technical, vocational or trade schools
4. Before moving onto the “Take a Closer Look: Things to Consider” section, ask your mentee to think about how they could choose what kind of college is best for them? What factors would they want to consider? Compare the answers to those listed. Which ones are the most important to them?
5. Now that they have an understanding of the kinds of colleges that exist, it's time for them to see what a college campus is like by taking a virtual tour. If there is a particular college they are interested in, you can visit it online and see if they have a virtual tour. If they don't have anything in mind, you can choose a local college, your alma mater or go to [www.knowhow2go.org](http://www.knowhow2go.org) and click “College Tour” under Middle and High School Students section to see what a typical college campus looks like.

### Tips for Mentors

The purpose of this session is to get your mentee excited about college, give them a sense of the variety of colleges available, and help them visualize going to college. If you know your mentee is interested in a particular subject or career (e.g. fashion or automotive mechanics), do some research before the session so you can suggest an appropriate college to “visit” on your virtual tour. Encourage your mentee to visit the website of any college they become interested in as a way to find out more. If they are really excited/interested and program policies allow, you may want to suggest they visit a college in person (or take them there yourself) to take an actual tour.

## HOW CAN I GET TO COLLEGE? MAKING A PLAN

### Background

National figures show that over 90% of middle school students expect to go to college<sup>5</sup>. However, in 2004 only 55% of those students who graduated high school continued immediately on to post-secondary education<sup>6</sup>. So what happens between middle and high school? While there are a number of factors, many middle school students who expect to go to college have no idea how it will happen or what they need to do to get there. Many of them, unfortunately, don't start to really think about college until their junior or senior year and find out that they aren't prepared. According to a study released by ACT in 2005, almost one-fourth (22%) of eighth and ninth grade respondents had not thought about their plans for after high school.<sup>7</sup> This is even more likely to happen to students from lower socioeconomic groups and those without a family or community history of college attendance. Taking the time to think about and make a plan for the future could be the difference between just thinking about college and actually making it there.

The goal of the session is to help your mentee develop personal goals around exploring college and career options.

### Activity

1. Explain to your mentee that you are going to be discussing goals and goal setting in the session.
2. Ask your mentee what a goal is? Can they define it? A good working definition for goal is: a statement describing what you want to be, do, or achieve in the future.
3. Talk about why it's important to set goals. Some reasons include the following:
  - It helps you identify what you want
  - It helps you see the steps you need to take to get there
  - It keeps you accountable
  - It makes it more likely to happen
4. Review the *Key Characteristics of Goals* ([Page 27: Resource Guide](#)) with your mentee and answer any questions they have.
5. Work with your mentee to set a goal for the year about exploring college and careers. What do they want to accomplish during your time together? Use the *Goal Setting* worksheet ([Page 28: Resource Guide](#)) to document their goal.
6. Explain to your mentee that you will be working on some of these steps (e.g. career exploration, study tips, etc.) together over the course of the year and that you will periodically be checking back to assess their progress on the goal.



#### **SPARK a Conversation!**

*How Does the Activity  
Connect to Your Vision  
Board?*

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<sup>5</sup> Markow Dana, Margot, Liebman and Jackie Dunbar (2007). *Middle School Poll*. (Prepared for the National Association of Secondary School Principals and Phi Delta Kappa). Rochester, NY: Harris Interactive.

<sup>6</sup> The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCTHEYMS). *Public High School Graduation Rates, 2004*.

<sup>7</sup> "College Readiness Begins in Middle School", ACT Policy Report, George L. Wimberly & and Richard J. Noeth, 2005.

## Tips for Mentors

This activity can also be completed online using the Life Map function at [http://www.youthhood.org/youth/lm\\_about.asp](http://www.youthhood.org/youth/lm_about.asp) instead of the worksheet. More information about youthhood.org is available in the *Additional Resources* section (Page 39: Resource Guide.)

If your mentee is ready and open to the idea, encourage them to set a goal around exploring college and thinking about what they want to do after high school. If that kind of goal seems unrealistic or too intangible for your mentee, start with a more concrete goal on any topic that is important to them. You can always come back to the activity after you have completed more of the curriculum and set a college exploration goal at that time.

Remember – goals should be about what your mentee wants. Your role is to support them, guide them and offer advice when asked, but not to direct the process. However, few people can believe in something that they haven't seen for themselves. Many mentees have never known anyone who has gone to college so it is difficult for them to believe that college is possible.

Mentors can expose mentees to the idea of college and help them understand that college is an option without pushing or forcing. As a mentor you should encourage your mentee to explore college. Emphasize that they do not have to decide now if they want to go to college or what they want to do, but that it is important to keep their options open.

## HOW WILL I PAY FOR COLLEGE?

### Background

Many low-income students often say they would have applied for college if they had known more about financial aid. Sharing information about the many resources for financial aid is a useful role for mentors. While actually filling out forms involves confidential financial information that only parents can provide, mentors can still have a role in guiding students to sites that walk them through the financial aid process, and just making sure students are aware of the resources for financing education. While 8th grade is too early to start filling out FAFSA and other forms, it is not too early to start thinking about how to pay for college and taking some concrete steps.

The goal of the session is to provide your mentee with a basic understanding of the many types of financial aid that are available.

### Activity

1. Remind your mentee that you talked about financial aid in a previous session as part of the myths about college.
2. Go to <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/> review the “Prepare For College” section.
3. Then review the Types of Aid to see different kinds of aid available, there’s even a short video that talks about scholarships, grants, loans, work study, etc.
4. Which of these kinds of aid might be helpful for your mentee and their family? Make a list and encourage your mentee to share it with their parents/guardians.

### Tips for Mentors

Be careful – financial information is very personal and some mentees (or their parents) may be uncomfortable discussing it. It is not your role to apply for financial aid – your mentee’s parents/guardians will have to do that. However, you can ease anxiety and provide resources that will help your mentee and their family tackle the serious challenge.

Your mentee will need a social security number to apply for federal financial aid. If they don’t have one, encourage them to apply now.

# BUILDING CHARACTER: I “C” MYSELF

## Background

According to a brief released by Public/Private Ventures in January 2009, a smooth transition from middle school to high school is strongly related to the likelihood of both finishing high school and staying in college until graduation.<sup>8</sup> While almost all ninth graders show declines in grades and attendance, some students are better able to recover. According to the brief, these students share certain characteristics in addition to strong academic skills that help make the transition to high school smoother and more successful. These traits include effective time management, problem-solving and study skills; strategies for balancing social and academic life; and accurate expectations about high school.<sup>9</sup> The section of the curriculum includes a series of modules to help you foster these traits in your mentee as they prepare to make the transition to high school.

## HOW CAN I STUDY SMARTER AND STAY ORGANIZED?

The goal of the session is to help your mentee understand good study skills and assess their study habits.

## Activity

1. Ask your mentee to describe themselves academically. What kind of student are they? What are their study habits? Note: if academics (grades or I'm not smart enough) were identified during the *Why College?* session as reasons why the mentee shouldn't go to college, make sure to connect that to the session and explain that there are strategies and tips that can help improve the mentee's study skills which usually leads to better grades.
2. Ask your mentee to complete the *Study Skills Checklist* ([Page 35: Resource Guide.](#))
3. The mentor should keep a list of any areas that the mentee needs to work on (time scheduling, concentration, listening & note-taking, reading, exams, or writing skills) and use a later session to follow up on those areas.
4. Review basic study skill tips at the following site:
  - <http://www.mappingyourfuture.org/collegeprep/mhscstips.cfm> discusses tips for making your classes count (e.g. sit close to the front, ask questions, take good notes, etc.)
5. Log onto [www.youthhood.org](http://www.youthhood.org) and use the Life Map to help your mentee to develop one goal to improve their study habits. (Note: If you are not registered on youthhood.org you can use the *Goal Setting* worksheet on page 28 of the Resource Guide.) Make sure you follow up with your mentee periodically to check their progress on the goal.

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<sup>8</sup> Paving the Way for Success in High School and Beyond: The Importance of Preparing Middle School Students for the Transition to Ninth Grade, Jean Baldwin Grossman and Siobahn M. Cooney, Public/Private Ventures, 2009.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

## **Tips for Mentors**

This session provides an overview of basic study skills; helps your mentee assess their study habits; and identifies their strengths and areas for improvement. Due to the number of possibilities, covering each skill in depth is beyond the scope of the curriculum. However, we encourage you to spend a future session(s) exploring those skills where your mentee needs improvement. The Cook Counseling Center in the Division of Student Affairs at Virginia Tech website ([http://ucc.vt.edu/academic\\_support/study\\_skills\\_information.html](http://ucc.vt.edu/academic_support/study_skills_information.html)) has a number of resources connected to the specific skills identified in the checklist. Additional suggestions are included in the Resource Guide.

## HOW CAN I MAKE THE MOST OF MY TIME?

The goal of this session is to teach your mentee how to manage their time effectively.

### Activity

1. Start by asking your mentee what they have to do for the week and make a list. Make sure they include non-academic responsibilities (e.g. chores) as well as social ones. Do they feel like they have enough time to fit everything in?
2. Explain to your mentee that today you are going to be discussing time management. Do they think it's important? Why or why not? Has there been a time when they didn't manage their time well (e.g. waited until the last minute to study for a test)? What happened as a result? If appropriate, the mentor should share an example from their own life (e.g. missing a work deadline or being late to a meeting).
3. You and your mentee should take the time management style quiz from Mind Tools [https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newHTE\\_88.htm](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newHTE_88.htm) and compare your results. Have fun going through the other tools and activities that can be found on the website. Develop a list of ideas for how each of you can improve your time management and organizational skills.

**If time allows, continue with the next section of the activity, otherwise STOP HERE.**

4. One key to successfully managing your time is prioritizing things you have to do. Go to <https://students.dartmouth.edu/academic-skills/learning-resources/time-management> and read and discuss the Managing Your Time section. Develop a plan to use one or more of these strategies in the week ahead as a way to test them and integrate the habit into everyday life.
5. If your mentee has developed a "to do" list, use the University Time Management which can be found at <http://lss.info.yorku.ca/resources/university-time-management/> as a guide to help with prioritizing. Discuss how items may change places in time (e.g. a term paper that is due in 2 months may be important but not urgent today, but as the due date approaches it will move into the urgent category.)

### Tips for Mentors

Many people have trouble understanding the difference between importance and urgency so they may be difficult for your mentee. It may help to define each of the terms first:

- Important - of great significance or value
- Urgent - pressing: compelling immediate action

If necessary go through each task with them and help them decide if it is important or just urgent. You may also want to include examples from your schedule to help them understand the difference.

## WHAT CAN I DO OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL? GETTING INVOLVED

### Activity

1. Begin by asking your mentee why it's important to get involved in the community and have interests beyond schoolwork.
2. Go to the "Getting Involved" section in the Community Center of [youthhood.org](https://www.youthhood.org): <https://www.youthhood.org/community/gettingInvolved.asp> and review the reasons listed for why people volunteer (e.g. discovering interests, developing confidence, etc.) and compare them to your mentee's reasons. Which of these reasons are important to them?
3. Move on to the next section, "Terms and Definitions," and discuss each of these ways to get involved with your mentee.
4. Now that your mentee has a basic understanding of the ways people get involved, it's time for them to think about what they can do. Review the *Self-Assessment* worksheet (Page 29: Resource Guide) they completed earlier, focusing on the things they like and the things they do well. Ask your mentee how they might use these interests and skills to get involved in activities, clubs, or community service.
5. Go to the next section of the website, "How to Get Involved," and ask your mentee to begin the *Finding Something I Want to Do Activity*. When they get to the point of finding a match, ask them to come up with two or three options of different activities they could be involved in. Make sure to save the activity so you can return at a later time.
6. Talk to them about how they can find out more information about each activity/organization (e.g. reviewing the website, calling the organization, etc.) and help them develop a list of questions for each one.
7. Ask them to take the list of activities and questions home to their parents/guardians and explain that they are interested in finding out more about them.



### ***SPARK a Conversation!***

*How Does the Activity  
Connect to Your Vision  
Board?*

### Tips for Mentors

Activities and volunteering are great ways for a young person to explore potential career interests. However, youth should be encouraged to explore a variety of interests even if they don't directly relate to a possible career.

You may want to review the "Leading" section of the Community Center at [www.youthhood.org](http://www.youthhood.org). The section contains activities and insight into a number of leadership-related topics such as respecting others, embracing diversity and communicating well that may be useful for your mentee.

Let your mentee know that service can also help them with their educational goals. Service can help demonstrate that they are a well-rounded individual and it can also help pay for college through scholarships and programs like AmeriCorps.

## HOW CAN I MAKE THE MOST OF HIGH SCHOOL?

The goal of this session is to help your mentee create a plan to make the most of high school.

### Activity

#### Middle School to High School Track

1. If your mentee is in **middle school**, ask if they have started to think about high school. What will it be like? How do they feel about it (nervous, excited, etc.)? Explain to them that you'd like to help them start planning for the academic side of high school.
2. Review these ten steps for the middle school to high school transition– <http://www.ownyourownfuture.com/files/documents/transitioning-from-ms-to-hs-s.pdf>  
Review these tips for middle school students getting ready to go to high school.

#### High School to College Track

1. If your mentee is in **high school**, ask if they have started to think about college. What will it be like? How do they feel about it (nervous, excited, etc.)? Explain to them that you'd like to help them start planning for the academic side of high school.
2. Review some of the following topics to prepare for the high school to college transition– <https://www.aie.org/get-ready-for-college/preparing-for-college/>
  - Is College For Me?
  - Academics
  - Beyond the Books
  - Degree and College Choices
  - College-ready steps

Now you'll explore each of these steps in more detail (with the exception of thinking ahead, which is the topic for the entire session).

#### Middle School Track

Review a list of high school graduation requirements with your mentee. Note: ideally the list would be obtained from the guidance counselor before the meeting. A list of requirements can be found by conducting a web search using the phrase "graduation requirements for \_\_\_\_" (your state and the current year). As you review the list, start adding courses to the attached High School Planning Chart ([Page 37: Resource Guide.](#))

#### High School Track

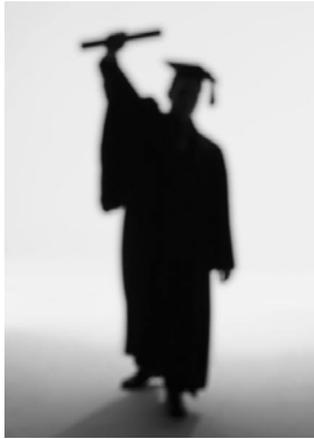
Review recommended classes for college entrance from the College Board (creators of the SAT) at <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/plan/high-school/33.html>. Compare the list to the graduation requirements already on the chart and add anything that is not already included.

1. Encourage your mentee to think about courses that will count for college credit such as AP or IB courses. They should plan to discuss which, if any, of these courses are available to them with their guidance counselor.
2. Review the Planning Chart with your mentee. Now that all of the graduation requirements and recommended classes are included, how many spots are left for electives? What classes might they want to take? Remind them that electives provide an opportunity to explore their interests and experiment with new subjects.
3. Encourage your mentee to use the chart throughout high school to track their progress and record their grades. They should also share the chart with their guidance counselor and update it as necessary.

## **Tips for Mentors**

We suggest your mentee complete the *High School Planning Chart* (Page 37: Resource Guide) in pencil so they can make changes as necessary. If possible, ask your mentee to get a copy of the high school graduation requirements from their guidance counselor before the session.

In addition to reviewing the recommended classes from the College Board, you may want to review entrance requirements for a specific college or two with your mentee. Ask them if there are any colleges they'd like to look up. If they don't have any ideas, choose a couple to explore with them (e.g. a local college, your alma mater, etc.)



# ACTIVITY AND RESOURCE GUIDE

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## REASONS FOR ATTENDING COLLEGE

Read through each reason and its explanation. Add any additional reasons at the bottom of the page. Rank each reason in the order of its importance to you with 1 being the most important.

Reason	Explanation	Ranking
Higher Salary (Economic)	On average, a person who goes to college earns more money than a person who doesn't. Over a lifetime, a college graduate can earn over <b>\$1,000,000</b> more than a high school graduate!  Source: studentaid.ed.gov	
Job Stability (Economic)	A college degree increases your chance of employment by nearly 50%. A two-year degree or even some college can have a positive impact on your ability to find and keep a job, too.  Fast Fact: The higher your education level, the higher your chances of finding and keeping a job.  Source: college.gov	
Job Opportunities (Economic)	According to one estimate, by the year 2028 there will be 19 million more jobs for educated workers than there are qualified people to fill them.  Source: knowhow2go.org	
Job Requirements (Economic)	By 2018, the economy will create 46.8 million openings—13.8 million brand-new jobs and 33 million “replacement jobs,” positions vacated by workers who have retired or permanently left their occupations. Nearly two-thirds of these 46.8 million jobs—some 63 percent—will require workers with at least some college education.  Source: georgetown.edu	
Exposure (Personal)	College opens up a whole new world, exposing you to opportunities and interests you may not know exist.	
Passion (Personal)	Many people wish they could earn a living doing what they love. By opening up new opportunities and expanding your choices attending college increases your ability to find your passion and do what you love.	
Prove You Can Do It (Social)	Other people may be telling you that you can't go to college because of who you are or where you are from – don't let them stop you!	
Provide Help and Support to Your Family (Social)	With a college education you'll be in a better position to help your family and provide them with additional resources.	
Your Reason		
Your Reason		

Your Reason		
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## Going to College – Myth vs. Reality

Adapted from “Mentors: College Myths”, <http://kh2go.devbox10.com/mentors/college-myths.html> .

To prepare for the myth-busting game you will need to create “cards” from the items below. Make a photocopy of the worksheet. Then cut out each card and fold in half so the statement is on one side and the explanation is on the other. If conversations with your mentee suggest that they believe in other myths about college that aren’t included there, feel free to make additional cards to address those topics.

Card 1

<p><b>Economic Benefits</b></p> <p>I can make a good living without going to college.</p>	<p>There is no doubt that some people have done well without a college degree. However, a college graduate will earn on average about a million dollars more than a high school graduate in their lifetime. For most people, college pays.</p>
---	--

Card 2

<p><b>Costs</b></p> <p>My family doesn’t have the money to pay for college and I (mentee) can’t afford to take out loans to pay for it.</p>	<p>Almost all students today can get low-rate education loans to help them pay for college, and education loans typically don’t have to be paid back until a student is out of school. The average loan debt of undergraduate students today is roughly \$20,000 – that’s less than the cost of most new cars! A car lasts a few years. A college education lasts a lifetime.</p>
---	---

Card 3

<p><b>Costs</b></p> <p>The college with the lowest price will be the most affordable.</p>	<p>Not necessarily! Some of the colleges with a high “sticker price” have raised significant amounts of money for scholarships from their graduates and friends. As a result, they have more money to give to students in the form of scholarships, which reduces the “sticker price.” After taking financial aid into consideration, a seemingly more expensive college may be more affordable than a college with a lower list price. <i>Tip:</i> Find out what kinds of scholarship options are available at the colleges you are considering.</p>
---	---

Card 4

<p><b>Timing</b></p> <p>There are a number of things I can do now, in middle school, to prepare for college.</p>	<p>While some students may wait to do certain things like visiting potential colleges or taking the SATs, there are other things that you can do now. For example, high school course selections and grades represent the single most important consideration in most colleges' admissions decisions. High school course decisions are made sometimes as early as middle school. Financial planning, saving for college and finding out which colleges will be affordable are other things you can start doing now.</p>
--	---

Card 5

<p><b>Costs</b></p> <p>There is a lot of financial aid available, even if I'm not the best student.</p>	<p>During the 2002-03 academic year, more than \$105 billion dollars in financial aid was awarded. The vast majority of the money was doled out by the federal government through grant, loan and work-study programs, while colleges' own grants and scholarships accounted for almost 20 percent of all financial aid. States helped too by contributing more than \$5.5 billion to the pot. That's a lot of money for a lot of students. In fact, more than 70 percent of students nationally receive some kind of financial aid.</p>
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Card 6

<p><b>Economic Benefits</b></p> <p>Nobody in my family has gone to college and they all have good jobs so I shouldn't go either.</p>	<p>After high school, you may have 40 or 50 years of employment ahead. Many changes will occur in the job market during that time. A college education will certainly give you more options for the long-term. Many of today's jobs that require only a high school diploma may no longer exist a few years from now. Your education should prepare you for the job market of the future, not the present.</p>
--	--

Card 7

<p><b>Timing</b></p> <p>My family really needs me to work for a year or two before I go to college.</p>	<p>Many students who don't go to college right after high school never get around to it. Others bring great experience to the college when they enroll because of what they did with the time off from school. It is wise for a student to apply to colleges of interest during senior year just like any other student. They can then ask a college to defer enrollment for a year or two, if the student needs the time away. Most colleges will hold the offer of admission, especially if the student has plans that will ultimately make the student even more interesting or valuable as a member of the campus community.</p> <p><i>Caution:</i> If the student works during the time away, the income of the student (if substantial) may hinder their need-based financial aid eligibility when they go back to school. Because the student will in many cases still qualify as a dependent student, only a small amount of income will be protected under the federal formula. Amounts beyond that can hurt financial aid eligibility.</p>
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Card 8

<p><b>Economic Benefits</b></p> <p>Education beyond high school will improve my employment outlook in the future.</p>	<p>Whether it's a 2-year or 4-year college degree, or a trade or technical certification program, more education opens doors to more opportunities.</p> <p>Research proves that education beyond high school leads to better paying jobs and lower unemployment. In fact, some studies show that a college education benefits the entire family, now and into the future. (Source: <a href="http://www.college.gov">www.college.gov</a>)</p>
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Card 9

<p><b>Family Concerns</b></p> <p>I'm very close to my family and we'll miss each other too much if I go to college.</p>	<p>You can continue your education by attending a nearby school while still living at home. If you decide to attend an out-of-town school, there are lots of ways to stay in touch, like letters, e-mails and phone calls. And there will be a lot of opportunities to see your family, like winter and summer breaks, and even parents' weekends.</p>
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Card 10 (Create Your Own)

<p><b>Topic</b> _____</p>	<p>Explanation:</p>
---------------------------	---------------------

Card 11

<p><b>Topic</b> _____</p>	<p>Explanation:</p>
---------------------------	---------------------

Card 12

<p><b>Topic</b> _____</p>	<p>Explanation:</p>
---------------------------	---------------------

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF GOALS

(Adapted from *Mentor Training Curriculum*, National Mentoring Working Group, 1991)

When developing a goal, make sure it meets the following characteristics:

- **Conceivable.** You must be able to conceptualize the goal so that it is understandable and be able to identify clearly the first step or two.
- **Believable.** In addition to being consistent with your personal value system, the goal must be one you believe you can reach.
- **Achievable.** The goals you set must be goals you can accomplish with your given strengths and abilities. For example, if you have never exercised, it would be foolish for you to set the goal of running a four-minute mile in the next week—that simply would not be achievable.
- **Controllable.** If your goal includes the involvement of anyone else, you should state it so that another person's cooperation (or lack of it) won't interfere with your achievement of your goal.
- **Measurable.** Your goal must be stated so that it is measurable in time and quantity. For example, if your mentee's goal is to pass English, the goal should include components necessary to pass the class: the number of assignments to be completed, when the quizzes are and how much time is needed to study for them, which chapter should be read and by when. That way, the mentee can gauge their progress day by day or week by week.
- **Desirable.** Your goal should be something you really want to do. Whatever your ambition, it should be one that you want to fulfill, rather than something you feel you should do. Of course, there are many things in life we have to do (earn a living, provide for a family if we chose to have one), but to be highly motivated, we must commit a substantial percentage of our time to doing things we want to do.
- **Stated without an alternative.** Research has shown that people who say they want to do either one thing or another (give themselves an alternative) do neither.
- **Growth-facilitating.** Your goal should never be destructive to yourself, others or society.

## GOAL-SETTING WORKSHEET

My Goal for the Future Is: \_\_\_\_\_

I want to finish the goal by: \_\_\_\_\_

Things I Can Do	Things to Learn	People that Can Help (w/contact information)	How They Can Help	Resources That Can Help

Steps to Take:

- List each step you will need to take to reach your goal.
- Write down notes about each step to help you remember why you need to do them.
- When you're done, check off the step.

Step	Notes	Finished
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

# SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

## Part 1 – What I Know About Myself

5 Things I Like to Do:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

4 Things That I Do Well:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

3 Things that are Important to Me:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

2 Things I Really Want in a Job:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

1 Thing I Really Don't Like:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 2 - What I've Discovered About Myself**

Career Interest Inventory Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Transferable skills scores:

\_\_\_\_\_ communication      \_\_\_\_\_ research & planning      \_\_\_\_\_ human relations

\_\_\_\_\_ work survival      \_\_\_\_\_ organization/management/leadership

The two most important things to me in a career are:

\_\_\_\_\_ and  
\_\_\_\_\_

The two least important things to me in a career are:

\_\_\_\_\_ and  
\_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

## CAREER NEEDS AND WANTS

(Source: America's Career Resource Network, Career Decision-Making Tool  
<http://cte.ed.gov/acrn/cdmt/und/value.htm>)

### Purpose

To identify your top two career needs and wants.

### Instructions

- ◆ Think of the 10 career needs and wants below in terms of their importance to you.
- ◆ Circle the answer that best describes its' relevance to you.
- ◆ Look at your choices in the "Very Important" column, go through them and choose no more than two that you view as the most important.
- ◆ Write these two career needs and wants below.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

<b>MONEY</b> — A need for extras beyond what you live on	<b>Less important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Very important</b>
<b>RESPECT</b> — The prestige that some occupations provide (Example: a doctor)	<b>Less important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Very important</b>
<b>FREEDOM</b> — Being able to work independently with little supervision	<b>Less important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Very important</b>
<b>STABILITY</b> — Occupations that have little turn-over or that offer job security	<b>Less important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Very important</b>
<b>VARIETY</b> — Occupations that expose you to diverse experiences and locations	<b>Less important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Very important</b>
<b>LEISURE</b> — Occupations that provide you with ample time for family and hobbies	<b>Less important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Very important</b>
<b>LEADERSHIP</b> — Occupations with responsibility for others and for planning	<b>Less important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Very important</b>
<b>SERVICE</b> — Occupations that help people and society in a very direct way	<b>Less important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Very important</b>
<b>INTEREST</b> — Working in a field that you find stimulating	<b>Less important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Very important</b>
<b>CHALLENGE</b> — A field that repeatedly tests your skills and abilities	<b>Less important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Very important</b>

## DEFINING WORK TERMS

America's Career Resource Network (ACRN) defines these key terms:

- **Career** is a sequence of occupations and other life roles that express a person's commitment to work and reflects a pattern of self-development. Each person has one lifelong career that may include many occupations and jobs.
- **Occupation** is a grouping of jobs with common tasks that require similar skills.
- **Job** is a paid position with specific duties, tasks and responsibilities in a particular place of work.

For each of the statements below, decide whether it describes a Career (C), Occupation (O), or Job (J) and write the correct letter in the space provided.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ After 25 years of service, Regina was recognized for her many contributions to state government.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Ricardo works at the local drug store as a pharmacist.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Marcus is a social worker. He has been a school counselor and worked at a homeless shelter.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Anna was just hired for a position at ESPN as a sports commentator.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Thomas is a master carpenter. He has the skills to make furniture, frame walls and build cabinets.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Kara is a college student. She hasn't chosen a major yet, but knows she wants to spend her time helping people.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Dylan is looking for part-time work to help him pay for college.

Answers: 1. C, 2. J, 3. O, 4. J, 5. O, 6. C, 7. J
---

## CAREERS THAT MATCH MY INTERESTS

Copy the chart as many times as necessary to capture all of the careers that match your interests.

Occupation	Description	Key Tasks	What about the occupation interests me?	Learn more?

## EXPLORING OCCUPATIONS IN-DEPTH

Copy and complete the form for each of the 3 – 5 occupations you want to explore in depth.

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

What tasks might be included in a typical day? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What kind of education and/or training is required? \_\_\_\_\_

How much does it pay? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the future for the occupation – is the number of available jobs growing? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Which of my skills will I use in the occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What is the work environment like? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Does the occupation meet the two most important needs I identified earlier? \_\_\_\_\_

## STUDY SKILLS CHECKLIST

(Source: Cook Counseling Center in the Division of Student Affairs at Virginia Tech  
<http://www.ucc.vt.edu/stdyhelp.html>)

First make a print out of the document. Using your printout, read each statement and consider how it applies to you. If it does apply to you, circle Y. If it does not apply to you, circle N. The purpose of the inventory is to find out about your own study habits and attitudes.

1. Y N I spend too much time studying for what I am learning.
2. Y N I usually spend hours cramming the night before an exam.
3. Y N If I spend as much time on my social activities as I want to, I don't have enough time left to study, or when I study enough, I don't have time for a social life.
4. Y N I usually try to study with the radio and TV turned on.
5. Y N I can't sit and study for long periods of time without becoming tired or distracted.
6. Y N I go to class, but I usually doodle, daydream, or fall asleep.
7. Y N My class notes are sometimes difficult to understand later.
8. Y N I usually seem to get the wrong material into my class notes.
9. Y N I don't review my class notes periodically throughout the semester in preparation for tests.
10. Y N When I get to the end of a chapter, I can't remember what I've just read.
11. Y N I don't know how to pick out what is important in the text.
12. Y N I can't keep up with my reading assignments, and then I have to cram the night before a test.
13. Y N I lose a lot of points on essay tests even when I know the material well.
14. Y N I study enough for my test, but when I get there my mind goes blank.
15. Y N I often study in a haphazard, disorganized way under the threat of the next test.
16. Y N I often find myself getting lost in the details of reading and have trouble identifying the main ideas.
17. Y N I rarely change my reading speed in response to the difficulty level of the selection, or my familiarity with the content.
18. Y N I often wish that I could read faster.
19. Y N When my teachers assign papers I feel so overwhelmed that I can't get started.
20. Y N I usually write my papers the night before they are due.

21. Y N I can't seem to organize my thoughts into a paper that makes sense.

If you have answered "yes" to two or more questions in any category, look at our Study Skills Self-help Information for those categories. If you have one "yes" or less in a category, you are probably proficient enough in these areas that you don't need Self-help Information. Feel free, however, to get information in areas that you may have special interests, even if you scored well.

Time Scheduling - 1, 2, and 3.

Concentration - 4, 5, and 6.

Listening & Note taking - 7, 8, and 9.

Reading - 10, 11, and 12.

Exams - 13, 14, and 15.

Reading - 16, 17, and 18.

Writing Skills -19, 20, and 21.

# HIGH SCHOOL PLANNING CHART

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject	9 <sup>th</sup> Grade				10 <sup>th</sup> Grade			
	<u>Fall</u>		<u>Spring</u>		<u>Fall</u>		<u>Spring</u>	
	Course	Grade	Course	Grade	Course	Grade	Course	Grade
English – Language Arts								
Mathematics								
Science								
Social Studies								
Foreign Languages								
Arts								
Computers								
Other								

# HIGH SCHOOL PLANNING CHART (continued)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade				12 <sup>th</sup> Grade			
	<u>Fall</u>		<u>Spring</u>		<u>Fall</u>		<u>Spring</u>	
	Course	Grade	Course	Grade	Course	Grade	Course	Grade
English – Language Arts								
Mathematics								
Science								
Social Studies								
Foreign Languages								
Arts								
Computers								
Other								

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### ABOUT YOUTHHOOD.ORG

[www.youthhood.org](http://www.youthhood.org) is an interactive, curriculum-based website that helps young people plan for life after high school. The site was designed by the staff of the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition at the University of Minnesota for young people to use with an adult guide (teacher, parent, mentor, etc.). The site is divided into various “neighborhoods” such as The High School, The Job Center, and The Community Center among others and includes activities, links to resources, and a curriculum guide for the adults. Some of the activities are referred to specifically in the curriculum but there are many others that you may find useful and relevant as you build a relationship with you mentee. We encourage you to register (and help your mentee to do so) in order to have access to the entire site.

### WHY COLLEGE?

[www.college.gov](http://www.college.gov) – site built by the U.S. Department of Education in collaboration with students. The “why go” section discusses five reasons to attend college.

[www.knowhow2go.org](http://www.knowhow2go.org) – both middle school and mentor sections have sub-sections called “why college” which give additional reasons.

[www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov) – middle school section. Provides a good overview of the college exploration process using the questions when, why, what, where, who and how. The “what” section has good information about the economic benefits of college.

#### Optional Activity

Visit [www.learnmoreindiana.org](http://www.learnmoreindiana.org) and take the “Ready for the Real World” quiz <http://www.learnmoreindiana.org/careers/exploring/Pages/Home.aspx>. Talk about the results. According to the quiz results can they make enough money to live the life they want without going to college?

### IS COLLEGE FOR ME?

[www.college.gov](http://www.college.gov) – the “I’m Going Guide” is a collection of common questions about college with answers from current college students.

[www.ecampustours.com](http://www.ecampustours.com) – in the “getting started” sections of the site look for the Tips for First Generation College Students.

#### Optional Activity

Visit [www.firstinthefamily.org](http://www.firstinthefamily.org) and review the “hard facts” and discuss them with your mentee.

## HOW WILL I PAY FOR COLLEGE?

<http://www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov> includes basic financial aid information and links in the get started section. It also has a tool—the FAFSA forecaster—which can be used to predict financial aid. While the tool is more helpful with students who are closer to high school graduation, you may want to tell your mentee about it and encourage them to review it with their parents at a later time.

## WHAT IS COLLEGE LIKE?

[www.college.gov](http://www.college.gov) – the “I’m Going Guide” is a collection of common questions about college with answers from current college students.

### Optional Activity

You and your mentee can create your own “Road to College” board game at [http://www.education.com/magazine/article/College\\_Board\\_Game/](http://www.education.com/magazine/article/College_Board_Game/)

## HOW CAN I GET TO COLLEGE?

### Optional Activities

[www.wiredfor2020.com](http://www.wiredfor2020.com), a project of the Mentoring Partnership of Minnesota, is designed to help mentors spark the interest and expand the possibilities for their mentees. The site includes an interactive Journey Map to help young people map their future from early childhood through high school.

If your mentee is really interested in working more on goal setting, go to the community tool box at [http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/sub\\_section\\_main\\_1209.htm](http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/sub_section_main_1209.htm). Chapter 22, section 6 has a good activity on goal setting.

## WHO AM I? SELF AWARENESS AND ASSESSMENT

America’s Career Resource Network – has a simple activity to find your RAISEC code in the Understanding section of the Career Decision Making Toolkit. The assessment can be found and downloaded in pdf or Word format at [http://cte.ed.gov/acrn/cdmt/und/match\\_work.htm](http://cte.ed.gov/acrn/cdmt/und/match_work.htm).

[www.careersmarts.com/dna.htm](http://www.careersmarts.com/dna.htm) – has a section on career DNA with an assessment that covers interests (RIASEC), work activities (people, data or things) and personality type.

[www.learnmoreindiana.org](http://www.learnmoreindiana.org) – in addition to the Career Clickers eXpress described earlier, the site also has an expanded version of the assessment called Career Clicker eXpanded.

### Optional Activity

Go to [www.driveofyourlife.org](http://www.driveofyourlife.org) and help your mentee register as a student in the “Drive of Your Life” game. This will allow them to save their “game” and return at a later time. “Drive of Your Life” is a career exploration game that helps middle and high school students learn more about themselves, higher education, and careers.

Help your mentee complete Step 1: Customize Your Ride where the mentee will answer 48 questions about their preferences and abilities. After every 8 questions they will have the opportunity to customize their car. At the end they will receive a personal style profile (similar to the RAISEC Code) and be able to customize their license plate. (Information on Steps 2 and 3 are included in the relevant modules below.)

## WHAT CAREERS MATCH MY INTERESTS?

[www.acinet.org/acinet](http://www.acinet.org/acinet) - provides links to career resources, including a library of occupational information. Also has a skills profiler - you rate your skills in a variety of categories and it gives you jobs that match those skills.

### Optional Activities

[www.bls.gov/k12](http://www.bls.gov/k12) - has a great activity – “What Do You Like” that matches basic interests (e.g. reading, sports, computers, etc.) to occupations. When your mentee selects a category they’ll get a list of careers. Clicking on a career will provide more information about it –we’ll cover that in the next session.

Drive of Your Life Step 2. Go to [www.driveofyourlife.org](http://www.driveofyourlife.org) and help your mentee login and complete Step 2: Plan Your Trip where the mentee will see careers that match their style profile with brief descriptions. They will need to choose at least 5 of these careers to test drive (Step 3 below)

## HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE? RESEARCHING CAREERS

[www.payscale.com](http://www.payscale.com) – allows you to see the average salary for an occupation based on years of experience and to customize it by geographic area.

### Optional Activities

Use the Occupational Outlook Handbook <http://www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm> for an in-depth look at an occupation. You can search for the occupation by industry or by name. Be prepared – the Occupational Outlook Handbook includes a lot of information and the results will require a lot of reading. You may want to take turns with your mentee reading aloud or, if possible, print the listing ahead of time so you have them available. If you choose to print the listing, you should still go through the steps to find the listing so they will know how to do it by themselves in the future.

Drive of Your Life Step 3. Go to [www.driveofyourlife.org](http://www.driveofyourlife.org) and help your mentee login and complete Step 3: Jump In & Drive. The mentee can explore each of the careers they chose earlier and learn about a typical day and “fast facts”.

## HOW CAN I STUDY SMARTER AND STAY ORGANIZED?

<http://www.how-to-study.com/> - contains articles on a variety of studying-related topics including content specific suggestions for math and language arts as well as general subjects such as procrastination and note-taking.

[http://www.ncsu.edu/tutorial\\_center/download/pdfs/tentraps.pdf](http://www.ncsu.edu/tutorial_center/download/pdfs/tentraps.pdf) - ten traps of studying and how to avoid them. Although written for college students, most of the suggestions are relevant for middle school students.

<http://www.sas.calpoly.edu/asc/ssl.html> - online study skills library designed for college students but has information on a number of topics that are relevant for the age group.

<http://www.scholastic.com/kids/homework/> - variety of homework resources and activities.

[http://school.discoveryeducation.com/homeworktheylp/homework\\_theylp\\_home.html](http://school.discoveryeducation.com/homeworktheylp/homework_theylp_home.html) - homework help on a wide variety of subjects.

<http://sf.factmonster.com/homework/studyskills1.html> - collection of resources on various subjects including taking notes, reading textbooks, and studying for tests.

<http://www.testtakingtips.com/> - lists of tips on a variety of topics (e.g. test anxiety, note taking, study skills & tips).

## **HOW CAN I MAKE THE MOST OF MY TIME?**

<http://www.how-to-study.com/> - articles on procrastination and time management.

<http://www.scholastic.com/kids/homework/> - in addition to the time management quiz discussed above, the organization section has a number of useful articles and activities including a “to do” list maker.

<http://www.ucc.vt.edu/stdyhlp.html> - includes an online study skills workshop “Time Management Strategies for Improving Academic Performance” with a quiz and activities for creating daily, weekly and semester schedules. It is designed for college students but many of the activities and tips are appropriate for younger students.

## **WHAT CAN I DO OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL? GETTING INVOLVED**

[www.youthgiveback.org](http://www.youthgiveback.org) – sponsored by the Youth Philanthropy Project in Richmond, VA the Community Service section has good information, geared to young people, on topics including the importance of community service, how to get involved, and tips for volunteers.

[www.ysa.org](http://www.ysa.org) – Youth Service America sponsors National Youth Service Day. 100 Ways You Can Change the World gives concrete examples for how youth can get involved (e.g. give blood or start a community garden) with links to other sites for more information.

## **HOW CAN I MAKE THE MOST OF HIGH SCHOOL?**

[http://www.getreadyforcollege.org/gPg.cfm?pageID=307&1534-D83A\\_1933715A=48b35689442ce4564bf87e13cd043856e48f8031](http://www.getreadyforcollege.org/gPg.cfm?pageID=307&1534-D83A_1933715A=48b35689442ce4564bf87e13cd043856e48f8031) – contains a list of what classes to take.

<http://www.mappingyourfuture.org/collegeprep/mhscstudents.htm> – The “Make High School Count” program has good information including a glossary of terms, tips for making classes count, and a course planning chart.

<http://www.ribgthey.org/courseshs.htm#middle> – has a list of courses to take in middle and high school.

Use the Chart to Collect Your **Tickets to Success** and Track Your Progress

**I “C” MY FUTURE**

*Ticket to Success*



What are MY Dreams? \_\_\_\_\_



Who am I? Self-Awareness and Assessment \_\_\_\_\_



What Careers Match My Interests? \_\_\_\_\_



How Can I Find Out More?  
(Researching Careers) \_\_\_\_\_

**After finishing a section, make a plan to celebrate your achievement.**

**I “C” MY OPTIONS**

*Ticket to Success*



Is College for Me? \_\_\_\_\_



What is College Like? \_\_\_\_\_



How Can I Get to College?  
(Making a Plan) \_\_\_\_\_



How Will I Pay for College? \_\_\_\_\_

**How will you mark your milestones?**

**I “C” MYSELF**

*Ticket to Success*



How Can I Study Smarter and Stay Organized? \_\_\_\_\_



How Can I Make the Most of My Time? \_\_\_\_\_



What Can I Do Outside of School?  
(Getting Involved) \_\_\_\_\_



How Can I Make the Most of High School? \_\_\_\_\_

**Refer back to the vision board – can it be changed, added to, enhanced?**

TICKETS TO SUCCESS

