A Guide to
College Positive Volunteering &
Connect2Complete Resources
For College Access & Success in Florida

Mentoring Students
From Kindergarten to College

Community Engagement

Peer Advocacy & Support
With College Students & Adult Learners

Service-Learning

Florida Campus Compact
Preparing the Next Generation for College, Career & Citizenship
July 2014

Greetings,

Florida Campus Compact (FL|CC) adapted Part 1 of this manual (originally created by Michigan Campus Compact in 2012) to assist students, teachers, faculty, administrators, and community partners in engaging K-12 students through college positive volunteers. In 2014, FL|CC amended the materials to include Florida specific resources for the College Positive Volunteers Toolkit and added Part 2 (The Addendum) as a college success toolkit based on the Connect2Complete pilot program (2011-2014). Funded by The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Campus Compact facilitated a three year pilot program with nine community colleges in Florida, Ohio and Washington and their related Compact state affiliates. These programs engaged more than 4,500 low-income, underprepared college students enrolled in developmental education courses designed to help them succeed in college.

It is our hope that this manual will offer resources, tips, forms, templates, and activities to support mentoring relationships at various stages of a student’s academic career, thereby improving access, retention and persistence of college students. We thank the many Florida Campus Compact staff, partners and AmeriCorps VISTA Members who contributed to this resource guide.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

DecDee Rasmussen
Executive Director, Florida Campus Compact
WHAT IS FLORIDA CAMPUS COMPACT?

**CAMPUS COMPACT** is a national coalition of nearly 1,200 college and university presidents representing some 6 million students who are committed to fulfilling the civic purposes of higher education. As the only national higher education association dedicated solely to campus-based civic engagement, Campus Compact promotes public and community service that develops students’ citizenship skills, helps campuses forge effective community partnerships and provides resources and training for faculty seeking to integrate civic and community-based learning into the curriculum ([www.compact.org](http://www.compact.org)).

**FLORIDA CAMPUS COMPACT** ([FL|CC](http://www.floridacompact.org)) works with over 50 colleges and universities in Florida to promote the scholarship of engagement through research, academically rigorous service-learning, campus-community collaboration, civic engagement, and collegiate volunteerism. FL|CC provides leadership to integrate service with academics and to link the collegiate experience with community agencies that address a spectrum of needs in cities and towns throughout Florida. FL|CC’s mission is to advance the civic purposes of colleges and universities by deepening their ability to improve community life and to educate students for civic and social responsibility. Visit [www.floridacompact.org](http://www.floridacompact.org) to learn more about our commitment and to join us in this mission.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

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Connect2Complete was originally launched in Florida in 2011 at Broward College, Miami Dade College and Tallahassee Community College. Although many were involved in its success, special thanks go to the following:

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Cathy Burack and Susan Lansperry at Brandeis University.

We would also like to thank everyone who contributed to the College Positive Volunteers Toolkit originally published by Michigan Campus Compact; please see the copyright page.
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COLLEGE POSITIVE VOLUNTEERS IN FLORIDA

Taking Steps Toward Postsecondary Education and Completion

A TOOLKIT For College Volunteers Helping K-12 Youth Aspire to Collegiate Success

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CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations on completing the College Positive Volunteers (CPV) training and certification process!

You are now a support person who can help K-12 students, college students and adult learners take steps toward postsecondary education. No matter what you do as a CPV—whether you are participating in an event or volunteering for an extended period of time—you are making a difference.

Don't forget to check www.thecompactaccess2success.com. This website contains updates and helpful resources. It also has downloadable copies of some of the CPV activities included in this guide that you can modify and share.

Website: www.floridacompact.org
To download a PDF version of this College Positive Volunteers Toolkit with Florida Specific Resources

While working with K–12 students, college students and adult learners, always remember the CPV Mindset and Motto!

THE CPV MINDSET

The belief that college is attainable for all students and that you are willing to do whatever you can to help those students prepare for and enroll in college.

THE CPV MOTTO

CPVs do not ask: “Are you going to college?” Instead, they ask: “Where are you going to college, and how can I help you get there?”
This manual has been created as a tool to assist in your preparation for working with youth as a College Positive Volunteer. It is intended to be as encompassing as possible, but is not inclusive of all possibilities and tools that exist for working with K-12 students, traditional age college students and adult learners. As a CPV, the main focus is stimulating student awareness of the opportunities college affords, sharing strategies for college preparedness, and encouraging students to pursue a college education. Every time you engage a student as a CPV, it is crucial to remain flexible. You will likely need to utilize various strategies as you build a relationship with a student. The tools and strategies outlined in this manual provide a guide to support a positive experience as a CPV. However, you will always need to assess the appropriateness of the activities and conversations planned for use at your sites. Once you get to know your student(s), you will be able to tailor activities to meet their needs. As a CPV, you have a unique opportunity to be an advocate for students and an advocate for education; linking the two for a powerful experience. Last but not least, be ready to learn! The students you encounter will yield incredible, engaging stories filled with ideas and experiences. Listen, learn and enjoy a wonderful experience as a CPV!
This manual is divided into sections with the intention of serving as both an extensive information source and a quick reference guide. The opening section provides general information helpful in preparation of your CPV assignment and for understanding the diversity of students. Following are three sections divided into the age groups of elementary, middle and high school. These sections outline college preparatory behaviors for students in these age ranges and suggest activities that volunteers can conduct with students to reinforce these behaviors. The remaining sections provide college preparatory resources helpful for volunteers and students such as information about paying for college, taking ACT/SAT tests, and a glossary of terms. The Addendum – Connect2Complete peer-to-peer mentoring for college students and adult learners is Part 2 of this toolkit.
Understanding all students

Being inclusive in your college access efforts

When working with diverse groups of students, it is crucial to understand that students bring a multitude of life experiences with them to school each and every day which, in turn, can greatly influence their experiences with education. For many reasons, students face challenges in life, leading them to become at-risk of dropping out of school. This section is intended to provide a basic foundation to alternative education in order for CPV's to be better prepared and more understanding when working with at-risk youth.

What is alternative education?

Alternative education programs are subsets of the traditional K-12 program. They are designed for students who can be better served in an alternative educational delivery system or who have been identified as having specific needs and/or are at-risk of not graduating. These programs seek to provide added flexibility and alternative instructional models and often include expanded services from the traditional setting such as online learning, institutional programs, counseling, childcare, and transportation in an effort to help students overcome barriers and meet the goals of the Mathematics and Language Arts Florida Standards.

What is at-risk?

An “at-risk” student is “any [student] who is unlikely to graduate, on schedule, with both the skills and self-esteem necessary to exercise meaningful options in the areas of work, leisure, culture, civic affairs, inter/intra personal relationships, [and who may drop out of school because of low academic performance].” A common misconception of at-risk students is that they are part of a homogeneous group. They are not a specific group within society rather; the term at-risk encompasses a very diverse population of individuals. At-risk students cross every race, social class, gender, sexuality, and religion as well as urban, suburban and rural lines. This group is an extremely diverse group sharing the commonality of being at-risk of dropping out of school.

What does it mean to be at-risk? (One or more of the following may apply)

- Challenges or troubles at home
- Learning challenges
- Substance abuse or addictions
- Physical abuse
- Intimidation
- Teen parent
- Lack of emotional support
- Sexual abuse
- At risk of dropping out of school
- Socioeconomic struggles
- Health issues
- Fear
- Hunger
- Single parent or non-parent household
- Lack of financial support
- Foster care youth

1. www.fldoe.org/kit/Curriculum/SSS
3. The characteristics and behaviors displayed above are not exhaustive of all possibilities when identifying at-risk students.
What types of behaviors might I encounter? (One or more of the following may apply³)

- Refusal to participate
- Apathetic
- Withdrawn
- Toughness
- Quiet
- Irritability / loss of temper
- Drug or alcohol use
- Disruptive / outbursts in class
- Threatening others

- An “I don’t care” attitude
- Depressed
- Aggressive or violent
- Argumentative
- Marked decreased performance
- Lack of sleep / drowsy
- Rejected by peers
- Inappropriate conversation / comments

What can I do to help connect with at-risk students?

UNDERSTAND TERMINISTIC SCREEN: Terministic screens are vocabularies or perspectives that are particular to members of specific socioeconomic, cultural, professional, or other social groups. Group members utilizing these vocabularies understand aspects of “reality” in different ways because each terministic vocabulary encourages members to “select” portions of “reality” while “deflecting” others.⁴ In other words, it is the manner in which people view and interpret the world around them based on their social class, race, gender, level of education, etc. For example, one person may believe that racism no longer exists because he/she has never experienced it nor witnessed it personally. Another person may be a frequent victim of racial discrimination or may witness it on a regular basis. Both have two very different perspectives on racism based on their terministic screen. If these two people meet and discuss the issue of racism, they could potentially encounter conflict or “butting of heads” regarding their differing perspectives. These perspectives, fueled by the vocabularies and personal experiences surrounding each person’s life, stem from their terministic screens. It is terministic screen that can make it difficult to fully understand others’ perspectives.

As a CPV, your position requires you to be open and non-judgmental as you are learning the terministic screens of the students with which you work. The goal is not to be “convinced” or to adopt or match a student’s terministic screen, but rather to withhold judgment and resist the temptation to be “right”. Simply attempting to see the student’s point of view and realizing how it differs from yours is a good first step. Then, you can gain an understanding of how the student’s experiences have shaped their view of the world. Understanding at-risk students’ terministic screens will allow you to connect with and understand them with more depth, allowing you to make connections and build stronger relationships.

BE CLEAR WHY YOU ARE WORKING WITH THE STUDENT: At-risk students may not be accustomed to people genuinely interested in helping them and may be suspicious of your motives. Be clear about why you are working with them and speak directly to them. Do not assume that they know why you are working with them or where you come from. This clarity will help build trust between you and your student(s).

BE AUTHENTIC: To connect with students, you must let them see you for who you are and be authentic in your interactions with them. It is common for volunteers to be anxious about how to connect with students. It is important to be yourself as students are perceptive and will not trust an adult who they feel is being “fake”. Begin by sharing something about you, or an experience that is meaningful to you. Being honest and open is more important than being the same. It is even okay to share with the students your own feelings of uncertainty, as it might put the student at ease and establish a human connection. Most importantly, be ready to listen. Ask questions about things that authentically

³ The characteristics and behaviors displayed above are not exhaustive of all possibilities when identifying at-risk students.
interest you and resist the temptation to “correct” a student’s response or point of view. Listen for something you relate to and build upon that connection.

**ASK COMFORTABLE QUESTIONS:** Start with general, lighthearted questions to get to know the students and allow students time to ask you questions. Don’t make assumptions about students’ lives or upbringing rather, use general questions to reveal details about their lives. If students provide a surprising or shocking response, do your best not to react negatively, but ask additional questions to inquire how they feel about what they’ve shared, if it feels appropriate. At the very least, resist giving your opinion, brushing over the student’s sharing with positive banter, or making empty promises to the student. Show that you are someone safe for them to speak to without judgment.

**SHARE ABOUT YOURSELF:** Tell students about your college experience. Include information like how you chose your college and what life experiences led to your interest in your major. If the student challenges you, make inquiries about the student’s challenge, rather than reprimanding them. Most likely, such behavior is the result of a defense mechanism and, if explored, can lead to a better understanding of your differences.

**TAKE BABY STEPS:** Do not worry if you do not feel an immediate connection. Each time you meet with the student(s), remember something about the last visit or interaction to use to attempt to build a relationship with them. This will help students realize that you listen to them and care about what they say.

**DON’T GIVE UP:** Use different approaches as you work with the student(s). It may take time to build trust with students. Be patient and continue to let the students know you are there to provide information, answer questions, and help them get to college. If one approach doesn’t work, try another the next time.

**MAKE TOPICS RELEVANT TO THE STUDENTS:** Remember that your world and that of the student(s) may seem very different. Do whatever you can to make conversation relevant to your student(s) to help them feel comfortable. Even if you aren’t sure what topics may be relevant, ask questions and attempt topics that the student has indicated an interest in. By communicating topics of interest, you can begin to break down barriers.

**BE WILLING AND EAGER TO LEARN FROM THE STUDENTS:** Many of the students you will be working with will have strengths and knowledge surrounding things or topics with which you may not be familiar. Embrace these strengths and allow the students to take on the role of teacher and get a glimpse of how the student sees the world. Encourage them to share their viewpoints, ideas, and knowledge.

**Strategies to approach interactions with at-risk students**

Start off with what you know and be authentic. You must be comfortable in order to help the student(s) feel comfortable. Start off with the basics; names, interests, similarities to you. If the student approaches the interaction negatively or highlights the differences between the two of you, then you must show the student that you are interested in learning. Ask questions, inquire about the student’s interests and life, and show that you are trying to develop a connection and that you also have goals for learning. You must establish that you are an equal, rather than someone there to solely “teach” or “help” them. You must begin by establishing a “we” approach – “We are in this together” and “We are going to work together”, etc.
Apathetic Student:

If a student seems apathetic or displays an “I don’t care, I’m not interested” attitude, do not force the student to participate. Do not be too focused on your “agenda”. Taking time to build rapport and connection with the student is invaluable, and will allow for more efficient exchanges once the student is comfortable with you. Rather than solely talking about college, try to have informal conversation with the student and share why you are working with him/her and share your passions. When attempting conversation, start with a broad topic that you think may connect to some experience or emotion of the student. Once you have established mutual ground or connection begin the process of funneling the conversation back to education using the connections you have established. By making the conversation relevant to the student, you will see a spark of interest from them. Build upon this spark to expand conversation.

Argumentative/Aggressive/Intimidating Student:

Whatever you do, do not engage in a similar behavior. Do not argue back and do not try to reason with the aggressive or intimidating behaviors of the student. You must stay calm and attempt to find a way to help the student feel comfortable enough with you to let their guard down. Once again, start by asking general questions or tell a story about yourself or your experience that will help break the ice. Remember that baby steps are still steps forward, and with time, you will build rapport with the student. (See Apathetic Student above)

Withdrawn/Shy/Quiet Student:

Students displaying these characteristics may have encountered a negative past experience which could lead them to feel weary of their interaction with you, making it difficult to establish a connection. A student who is withdrawn, shy and/or quiet (introverted) does not mean that the student is not interested in you or what you have to offer. Thus, you must be creative and comforting as you approach your work with him/her. Similar to apathetic or aggressive students, you can begin by sharing why you are there, tell stories about something that may relate to an experience of the student, and/or ask general questions. It often helps to share about yourself to help the student feel at ease and not feel pressured to speak or share at first. Bring activities that can offer a focus for conversations and take the focus off of the student. This may help him/her feel more comfortable.

BEFORE VOLUNTEERING CHECKLIST

☐ **PEOPLE BEFORE STUDENTS:** Remember first and foremost that the youth you are working with are people before they are students. It is easy to become captivated by our roles as volunteers, teachers, mentors, etc., but it is crucial that you focus on your shared human experiences as people first. This will help you establish a comfortable, trusting, and meaningful relationship with the youth.

☐ **SMILE:** Authentic smiles can help break down barriers by helping to show that you care, removing fear, and creating a more comfortable atmosphere between you and the student.

☐ **CARE:** Although a number of personal goals may be tied to why you are a volunteer, make a choice to care about the postsecondary achievement of the K–12 students you work with. Many at-risk students have never thought about college as an option or may not be familiar with college at all. You have an opportunity to authentically influence college dreams. Be careful to not seem overbearing or pushy as this could distance students from you.

☐ **BE CULTURALLY SENSITIVE:** A student’s community may be different than your home community; be sensitive to those differences. Do not impose your cultural views on the students but rather attempt to understand the student’s perspectives in order to better understand how to connect college within their lives. (Review “Understanding All Students” on page 2)

☐ **BE EMPATHETIC:** Try to understand the manner in which students view the world and try to be empathetic to their experiences and respectful of their opinions.

☐ **BE READY TO LEARN:** Be ready to learn about yourself and others throughout and as a result of your volunteering experience. Remember that you must be open to learning in order to maximize your learning experience. As you work with the students, they will learn from you while at the same time, you will have an opportunity to learn many things from them.

☐ **WEAR YOUR COLLEGE GEAR:** This is a simple but effective way to promote college. This not only demonstrates school pride, but it also sparks conversation about college. However, be aware that certain colors carry strong meaning in some schools and communities. Certain colors may represent a specific gang or group affiliation. Wearing the wrong colors may negatively impact your connection and work with students. If you are unsure which colors are inappropriate, select neutral clothing colors (grey, white, tan, etc.) that highlight your schools’ name or mascot or ask an administrator or teacher at the school prior to your participation.

☐ **BE PREPARED:** You are more likely to be successful if you prepare.
  - Print off necessary activities and materials from the CPV website: [www.floridacompact.org](http://www.floridacompact.org) with Florida specific resources or [www.thecompactaccess2success.org](http://www.thecompactaccess2success.org).
  - Know about your college and be able to talk about it by filling out “Talking Points about Your College” on page 16.
  - Feel better prepared to answer students’ questions by reviewing “Frequently Asked Questions” on page 8 and “We Don’t Know What We Don’t Know” on page 12.

☐ **BE SUPPORTIVE:** Encourage students to do well in school, to pursue their dreams, and to attend postsecondary education, by responding with “yes, you can”, not “maybe you can’t.” Positive encouragement is crucial for first generation college-interested students. Remind students that it is never too late to improve grades and strive to learn more. College can be an option for any student with determination and effort!
Before volunteering checklist

- **HAVE A MUTUAL GOAL:** Each time you engage with a student, have a personal and mutual goal for the session. This goal can be something stated with the youth, or it can be a goal you have in mind to achieve during the interaction.

- **BE INTROSPECTIVE:** Be aware that sometimes you will respond to a moment, the context, or the K–12 students based on the things that have shaped you, not what actually is or has occurred. Often times, ideas will be born from your interaction with the student if you are willing to listen and allow them to arise.

- **LISTEN:** Effective listening will help you develop appropriate CPV strategies for the students. Listen intently when students speak to you as you may potentially be the only person they have that is willing to listen to what they have to say.

- **BE FLEXIBLE:** Things may not go as planned, but that does not mean you have been unsuccessful. Flexibility fosters an environment inclusive to all students' unique needs and characteristics. Do not be afraid to adjust your plans or activities when interacting with students. Don't take it personally if you experience negative interactions with or behaviors from students.

- **AVOID JUDGEMENT:** Many factors contribute to an individual's life history. Take care not to judge the backgrounds, socioeconomic level, aspirations, parents/guardians, etc. of the K–12 student(s). Remember that the lives of many students may look very different than what you might expect or what you may have experienced.

- **BE INNOVATIVE:** Utilize the provided suggestions from the CPV manual, but modify them to fit the youth you work with. Create discussion points and use tactics that will be relevant to the youth. Be willing to try ideas/activities that the student suggests.

- **BE CONSISTENT:** If you say you will be somewhere, show up. Nothing says “I don’t care” like not being there.

- **BE PROFESSIONAL:** When volunteering, you represent that organization and your institution.

- **BE REAL:** Authentically share your personal stories based on your experiences. Being “real” will help to build trust and connections with the youth. Don’t try to be someone you are not based on fears of the student accepting you or making assumptions.

- **BE A GOOD ROLE MODEL:** As a role model, you should also be aware of how your actions outside of your volunteer experience may impact your presence at the community site.

- **EXERCISE CAUTION:** The youth are looking at you as a role model, but they may also look at you in ways you are unaware of. Try to avoid and discourage inappropriate emotions or actions. Stay positive and do your best to never react negatively to interactions with or information revealed by the student.

- **AIM HIGH BUT HAVE REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS:** A crucial role of a CPV is to have the expectation that all students are capable of entering and completing postsecondary education. Aim high but have realistic expectations about your influence on a student to avoid leaving both of you feeling frustrated and defeated.

- **FOLLOW UP:** Don’t make promises to the K–12 youth that you cannot keep or do not intend to keep.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

It is common for college educated people to take for granted knowledge and vocabulary about the college experience and its benefits. Many first generation college students are unfamiliar with college terminology and/or aspects relating to college and the process of applying to and going to college. In preparation for your CPV experience, review these questions that K–12 youth might have about college. The rule of thumb is to never assume a student has the same understanding as you of beliefs, processes, and terminology related to college.

Why should I go to college?

The simple answer is money. College graduates earn more money and are less likely to be unemployed. According to U.S. Bureau of Labor figures, during 2014, full-time workers ages 25 and over earned these wages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATION ATTAINED</th>
<th>MEDIAN WEEKLY EARNINGS</th>
<th>UNEMPLOYMENT RATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Degree</td>
<td>$1,714</td>
<td>2.3 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral Degree</td>
<td>$1,623</td>
<td>2.2 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's Degree</td>
<td>$1,329</td>
<td>3.4 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's Degree</td>
<td>$1,108</td>
<td>4.0 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate's Degree</td>
<td>$777</td>
<td>5.4 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College, No degree</td>
<td>$727</td>
<td>7.0 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma</td>
<td>$651</td>
<td>7.5 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less Than High School Diploma</td>
<td>$472</td>
<td>11.0 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the ability to earn more money may be an easy answer to the question of why college is important, it is by no means the only answer. A college education provides a number of economic and social benefits for individuals and society in general. Following is an array of the potential benefits of a postsecondary education:

The Potential Personal Benefits of Postsecondary Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSONAL ECONOMIC BENEFITS</th>
<th>PERSONAL SOCIAL BENEFITS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher salaries and benefits</td>
<td>Improved health/life expectancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Improved quality of life for offspring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher savings levels</td>
<td>Better consumer decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved working conditions</td>
<td>Increased personal status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/professional mobility</td>
<td>More hobbies, leisure activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Potential Public Benefits of Postsecondary Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PUBLIC ECONOMIC BENEFITS</th>
<th>PUBLIC SOCIAL BENEFITS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased tax revenues</td>
<td>Reduced crime rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater productivity</td>
<td>Increased charitable giving and community service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased consumption</td>
<td>Increased quality of civic life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased workforce flexibility</td>
<td>Social cohesion/appreciation for diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decreased reliance on government financial support</td>
<td>Improved ability to adapt to and use technology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. www.bls.gov/emp/ep_chart_001.htm
8. A professional degree is a special degree that allows someone to be a medical doctor, dentist, pharmacist, etc.
Additionally, a college education can lead to a sense of personal fulfillment and empowerment, an increase in self awareness, a better grasp of local and world events, more efficient problem solving skills, and exposure to and appreciation for various cultures and worldviews.

**What do you mean by “college”?**

Colleges include a range of postsecondary institutions that offer career-based training for students after they finish high school. These may be two–year or four–year institutions or career-focused institutions where students learn specific trades.

**What is college like?**

It can be fun and exciting, but the coursework can also be challenging. To find out more about college and college life, talk to several people who have been or are currently in college. (Reference “We don’t know what we don’t know” on page 12)

**What are professors like?**

Professors have much diversity in their styles and abilities and are often very different than what you may have experienced in middle or high school. Professors are heavily involved with research and service outside of their classrooms; thus, tend to be very busy. The number of students each professor serves is based on how many classes they teach. This can range drastically from twenty students to several hundred. Professors sometimes have teaching assistants who teach a portion of their course or answer questions from students. Most professors have designated office hours to meet with students and answer questions. In some cases, professors will meet on an appointment only basis. Ultimately it is very important to try to speak with your professors during each semester and make sure they know who you are. Establishing communication and relationships with professors is beneficial to your experience, success in college, and the process of seeking a job or applying to graduate school.

**Is a 4-year college just like high school, except that you live on campus?**

The differences between college and high school are much more extensive than living on campus. In high school, most students take the same general subjects. In college, all students are required to take some general courses, but the majority of courses are specific to each student’s fields of study/career paths. In college, students have far more options when selecting courses and professors. College students can use resources (talking to other students, online resources, friends, etc.) to find professors that best fit their styles and preferences for learning. In college students are required to push themselves on a daily basis to make sure assignments are completed as no one is there to monitor or supervise their progress. Instructors are often less forgiving than high school teachers. For example if an assignment is not completed, you may not have an opportunity to hand it in later. In college, you are expected to be adult–like and take responsibility for your decisions and actions.

**When should I start preparing for college?**

Right now. Look over the college prep checklists within the appropriate age section for details on how to prepare. You can find out about the steps from your high school guidance counselor, a teacher, or mentor. It is never too late to start thinking about and/or preparing for college. You can also visit the College Board website, a helpful website for all of your college preparation needs, at [www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org](http://www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org).
When should I apply for college?

You should begin making steps toward applying for college in your junior year. Begin by making a list of colleges you would like to attend and get admission requirements for each school. If possible, you may want to visit some college campuses. You will also need to take college entrance exams in your junior year. Usually by November of the senior year, applications should be submitted. Check each school’s application guidelines to make sure you do not miss any application deadlines as deadlines vary from school to school. Also refer to the High School Preparatory Checklist on page 45.

Where should I go to college?

The size, location, cost, and course offerings, among other things, may all play a part in the decision-making process of choosing a college. There are many different types of colleges, and you will have to find a college that is a good match for you. Regardless of your grades, there are colleges that can be a match for you and that will help you move forward with your education. Ask teachers or others who have attended college about where they attended college or about their experience.

What kind of classes should I take in college?

It depends on your chosen career path or field of interest/major. If you want to get an idea about the type of classes you would have to take for a particular major, check out a college’s website. Most colleges have required general education categories and courses. Students choose from these categories to complete their required general education courses. In addition to these courses, students choose their major (specific area of interest) and then must take specific courses within that area to meet the requirements for the major and degree. Students who have struggled in high school may want to begin part-time and take classes in subject areas they enjoy to set themselves up for success in college.

What if I don’t know what I want to be before I have to apply for college?

Don't panic. Many students don't know what they want to be after they graduate from high school. Most 2- and 4-year schools require students to take general education courses before taking courses for specific career paths/fields of study. That time can be used to explore possible fields. Many students enter college and change fields several times before graduating. To learn about careers that match your interests, take a career aptitude test (see your school counselor) or the career paths self-inventory on page 75.

What should I do if I haven’t done that well in high school?

No matter what your grades, you can still go to college! There are different types of colleges for people of all skill levels and interests. Maybe a 4-year school isn’t for you. You can still choose to attend 2-year colleges or other post-high school career training programs. 2-year colleges, like community colleges, and most career training schools usually accept all students who apply. Many students begin at these institutions to transition to higher education and gain experience before later choosing to transfer to a 4-year college to finish their degree. Additionally, remedial classes are available at many colleges for under-prepared students. Remedial courses may not count for credit but help students catch up academically so they can perform successfully in traditional classes.
How much does college cost?

It depends. You will have to visit the website of or contact each school’s registration office to find out specific costs. In general, 2-year schools, such as community colleges, cost less to attend than 4-year institutions. However, don’t make a decision about a school solely based on stated costs. Some schools may cost more but also may offer more scholarships and financial aid, making them just as affordable as less expensive institutions. Typically tuition for colleges in the same state where you live (in-state) is cheaper than if you choose to attend a college in a state other than where you live (out-of-state).

How will I pay for college?

Even if you are unsure about whether family resources are available to pay for college, you can still get a college education. There are a number of options when considering how to pay for college, such as financial aid, scholarships, grants, loans, and work study programs. Approximately ⅔ of all college students receive one or more of these types of financial aid. Check with your high school counselor and the financial aid office of the college you plan to attend to find out more information about potential funding options. The financial aid section of this toolkit on page 60 is a great resource.

Where are the colleges in Florida?

Florida College Guide is one Internet source that lists colleges in Florida by location, major/area of study and type of institution (www.flcollegeguide.com). For example, if you want to be in an urban area, you can attend a college like the University of Central Florida, located in the city of Orlando, or you can attend a college in a rural setting like North Florida Community College, located in the town of Madison. For more information about other postsecondary institutions, check with your guidance counselor, or go to www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search. Scroll down to “College Search” under the “Find Colleges” tab. For a list of Florida Campus Compact’s participating institutions visit www.floridacompact.org/members.html.

Should I go to college in Florida?

The decision to attend college in Florida or in another state is up to you and your parents/guardians. The state has excellent colleges to choose from. Be sure to make an informed decision about the college you plan to attend based on what you want to study and if the college campus and community feels like a comfortable match for you. Colleges have a less expensive tuition rate for residents from their state (in-state tuition) versus a higher tuition for non-residents coming from another state (out-of-state tuition).
WE DON’T KNOW WHAT WE DON’T KNOW

LAYING A FOUNDATION

For first generation college-interested students, it is crucial that information about college and terms related to college are broken down in an understandable, comfortable manner. Often times, questions relating to college aren’t comfortable or understood because the terminology is new thus leaving students without the foundation needed to begin asking questions. Begin with the basics and help paint the picture of college! Below are key terms and examples, often not understood by students, to help you provide explanations. Use these definitions and examples to reinforce conversations with students about college and to help you gain a foundation of what types of things may be unknown or misunderstood regarding college and the college process. Many students do not know that they don’t know about college, thus, this is your opportunity to help them gain needed tools to visualize and realize a future with college!

2-YEAR COLLEGE: This is a community which students can attend for vocational training, certifications, 2-year (associate's) degrees, take courses to later transfer to a university, or take courses at while attending a university in order to save money.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE: A community college is a 2-year public institution that provides higher education and lower-level tertiary education. Many types of degrees are offered including associates degrees, certificates, diplomas, and continuing and adult education. Community colleges offer opportunities to transfer to 4-year institutions, workforce preparation, developmental education (remedial education) for academic preparation for college, and industry training (certificates of skills or trades). Many community colleges have articulation agreements with specific 4-year institutions which facilitates the process for students of transferring credits towards a bachelor's degree. Community colleges are typically supported by local tax revenue. Because of the plethora of programs offered which vary greatly in duration and needed qualifications, for anyone driven to continue with education, community colleges offer opportunities, regardless of previous grades and performance.

In Florida, refer to The Florida State College System at www.fldoe.org/fcs/colleges.asp to find out more information about a local campus near you. Institutions of The Florida State College System may offer a four-year degree for certain majors.

4-YEAR COLLEGE: Also known as a university. These are the schools that can range in size from as small as 300 students to as large as 50,000 students where students can receive a bachelor's degree.

CAREER-BASED TRAINING: Career-based training typically includes specific training for trades or careers that take a short period of time for completion (several weeks to several months). Examples of this type of training include phlebotomy (drawing blood), Radiology Technician (x-rays), Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA), heating and cooling certificates, welding certificate, etc.

PRIVATE VERSUS PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS: Community Colleges are public colleges supported by state and local taxes and are usually smaller in size than universities. Public universities are partially supported by state taxes and are typically the largest universities in the country. The majority of Division I (highest level of college sports) college teams come from public universities which tend to be more affordable than private institutions. Private institutions do not get tax payer money but receive the majority of their funding from investments, donors, and tuition. Private institutions also differ from public universities in that they are typically more expensive to attend, smaller in size, and often have higher prestige when compared to public universities. Both public and private institutions have their pros and cons and it is important to make your selection based on what best suits your needs as a potential college student.
PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS: For example, law degree/jurisdoctorate (J.D.), masters in business administration (M.B.A.), medical degree (M.D.), doctor of veterinarian medicine (D.V.M.), and doctor of dental surgery (D.D.S.) are just a few of many different types of professional degrees. Professional programs require at least a 4-year bachelor’s degree and often require a master’s degree or professional experience for admittance.

ADMISSIONS: Every college has an admissions office that determines the requirements and procedures for applying to each institution. Typically the admissions office collects all application materials for review and makes all final acceptance decisions.

APPLICATION AND APPLICATION PROCESS (FEE WAIVERS): The application process is determined by each college. However, typically the application process follows a similar structure for the undergraduate level (at a 4-year institution). Often online, each applicant must fill out an application for admission. In addition, students must provide 2-3 recommendation letters, 1-2 written essays, statements surrounding extracurricular activities, school transcripts (GPA), and standardized test scores (ACT, SAT, etc.). For each institution’s application, a fee ranging from $25.00 - $100.00 is typically required. Students can request an application fee waiver (a pass based on individual family finances that waives the fee for admission) from the institution and/or should request information from the admission’s office, their high school counselor, teacher or mentor, or search for details on the college’s website.

RECOMMENDATION LETTERS: For admittance to most 4-year colleges, students are required to submit recommendation letters from teachers, administrators, or community members. These letters are often required to explain the person applying to college, their activities, work ethic, personality, qualities, academic ability, etc. There are typically standardized recommendation forms that the student gives to individuals who will write the recommendation letters and submit them directly to the college.

CUMULATIVE GPA: The cumulative grade point average (GPA) is the average of all grades of a student for all semesters and classes taken up to the moment of calculation. Most colleges consider GPA as part of the admissions process.

COURSE VERSUS CREDIT: A course is the actual class that you are taking for example History 101. History 101 can be worth 3 credits as every course you take is worth a certain amount of credits ranging from 1 to 6 credits. In order to graduate you may need 120 credits which would mean you need 40 courses (give or take) to graduate. Some course credits can transfer from dual enrollment programs (college credit for courses taken in high school) from high school. Check with your advisor or school counselor.

MAJORS AND MINORS: A college major is a specific area of concentration of classes that leads to a college degree. Majors surround specific subjects, themes, or professional fields like business or biology. A minor is a student’s chosen secondary focus of study in college. Typically a minor requires fewer total credit hours for completion.

GENERAL EDUCATION: These are the courses that are referred to as GE courses; courses not taken as part of a major. For example some GE courses are classes found within mathematics, writing, speech, arts, sciences, and humanities. There is a plethora of GE courses offered for students to choose from based on their interests. This leaves most students’ course selections to look very different than their peers. GE course options are typically split into categories such as writing, social sciences, math, etc. Each student can work with an advisor to determine the most appropriate GE course selections. GE courses are crucial in helping college students develop a well-rounded knowledge base to become informed college graduates.
DEGREE: A degree is the diploma or title received upon completion of all college academic requirements. Common academic degree types include high school diploma, Associate's degree (typically 2 years), Bachelor's degree (typically 4 years), Master's degree (typically 1-3 years after a bachelor's degree), and Doctoral degree (typically 4-6 years after a bachelor's degree, sometimes requiring a master's degree for admission).

SCHEDULE: A schedule consists of the times and days for selected courses. For example, a college student may choose to take four courses in a semester (16 weeks). These courses may take place on Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:15 am - 11:45 am and 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm and then two courses on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 am - 10:15 am and 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. When selecting courses to take, students create a class schedule. Using this class schedule, students can create their own schedules based on their preferences and also help stay organized and monitor class attendance, work schedules, extracurricular meetings and activities, etc.

REMEDIAL COURSES: These are non-credit courses, often referred to as developmental courses that offer skills to develop reading, writing, math, or language skills in order to be at an academic level necessary to complete standard degree requirements. Some students entering college are under-prepared in one or more area and utilize remedial courses to help gain the skills necessary to be successful in required courses.

TUITION (IN-STATE VERSUS OUT-OF-STATE): In-state tuition refers to attendance at a school within the state where you live. For a Florida resident, the cost to attend The Florida State University during the 2014-2015 academic year is $5,016. Out-of-state tuition (someone without legal residency in the state they wish to attend college) to attend The Florida State University is $20,918. There is a major tuition cost difference to consider when deciding to attend a school in-state versus out-of-state.

FINANCIAL AID: Please refer to the “Ways to Pay for College” section on pages 60-68 for detailed explanations and websites regarding the following types of financial aid. It is crucial that the youth understand what each of the items are and the differences between them as many first generation college students do not have extensive support with the financial aid process and find it intimidating and difficult to navigate. It is also important to share that all colleges have financial aid offices that can assist applicants with the process of applying for financial aid. The earlier students begin the financial aid process, the better their chances of diversified support.

FAFSA: Scholarships, Loans, Grants, Cost of living aid, Childcare grants

CAMPUS LIVING (THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE): Take time to share the details of what campus living is all about. If you lived on campus, then share the things that you learned about while living on campus. Remember that students are often not well informed when it comes to living on a college campus. Help the youth visualize that campus is often very similar to a small town or city.

DORMS: If you currently live on campus and the youth comes to visit your campus, invite them to view your dorm room (accompanied by an approved chaperone or other authorized adult) so they can have an idea of what it is like to live in a dormitory. If you do not live in a dorm, find a friend willing to show your visiting student(s) their dorm room. If they cannot visit your campus, utilize resources like YouTube on the Internet and search for videos called “Campus Cribs” that highlight what living on campus is like for students. Additionally, share details about dorms on campus such as laundry facilities, how many people per room, bathrooms and showers (in your room or a shared bathroom), tv or study lounges, etc. Explain how the common areas are used within the dorms.
Before you volunteer, we don’t know what we don’t know.

- **Dining Halls**: If the youth visits your campus, take them to eat in the dining hall so they can experience how dining halls function and what they are like. If they don’t visit, explain how dining halls function, how you pay, how much you can eat, when they are open, types of food, etc.

- **Gym**: If possible, take the student to the university athletic center or exercise facilities on campus or in your residence hall.

- **Computer Lab Access**: All students on campus have access to public computer labs and Internet access. Most buildings have Wi-Fi access that students can use during class or in the public areas on campus. Students are given a log in and password to have access to campus computer-based resources. Many professors utilize the Internet and online based programs to communicate with students about their classes.

- **Classrooms**: Classrooms are typically spread across campuses and are found within dorms, office buildings, libraries, etc. Classrooms range in size and style and usually have available Internet access.

- **Extracurricular Activities**: There are hundreds of activities that provide opportunities to get involved on campus and within the surrounding community. Most colleges have registered student organizations (RSOs) that encompass groups from ping pong clubs to dance troupes, intermural athletic teams to business groups. Check for opportunities on each campus as each offers something unique.

After sharing campus living experiences with the youth or describing the different components above, they should have a better understanding of how living on campus is a self-sustainable home away from home.
KNOW TALKING POINTS ABOUT YOUR COLLEGE

To help you be prepared with answers about your college, complete this talking points worksheet.

GENERAL INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION

Type of institution, 2-year or 4-year, public or private: ________________________________

Approximate number of students (undergraduate students if you are at a 4-year institution): __________________

Demographic breakdown of the school’s student population:

European American: ____________ Latino/Hispanic: ____________ Other: ______________

African American: ______________ Asian: ______________

Percentage of international students: __________________ Institution’s mascot: __________________

Minority Student Services/Diversity Office: __________________

Academic support services: __________________

Collegiate sports teams (Varsity and Club): __________________

The name(s) of any famous individual(s) who graduated from your college (i.e., individuals with notable accomplishments):

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Student clubs, intramural sports, music groups, cultural clubs, fraternities, sororities, and other groups that may be of interest: __________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

The name of your school newspaper/radio station: __________________

CAMPUS LIVING

What makes your school unique: __________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

The number of dormitories on campus and what they are like (roommate requirements, bathrooms and showers, dining halls, TV and study lounges, music rooms, movie rentals, gyms, etc.): __________________

__________________________________________________________________________
BEFORE YOU VOLUNTEER

Know talking points about your college

What dorm living is like:

What college students do for fun at your school:

Information about where the student center is and what is inside of it:

Whether or not your school has a fitness center students can use:

What types of opportunities are available to get involved with the community:

What types of student organizations students can join:

Study abroad/Study away opportunities:
INSTITUTION REQUIREMENTS, APPLICATION LOGISTICS, AND FACTS

Where to get an application for your school and the application deadline for the current school year:

____________________________________________________

The application fee (Is there a waiver process? If so, what is it and what is the process?): ________________________________

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

Whether your school offers the field of study the student is interested in or not: ________________________________

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

Any professional programs offered by your college (i.e. a medical school, a law school, a school of pharmacy, a school of dentistry, etc.) and explain what a professional program is: ________________________________

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

The estimated cost to attend your college, whether a student is living on campus or at home and commuting to college; check out your college website or try the National Center for Education Statistics at www.nces.ed.gov: ________________________________

____________________________________________________

Whether your school accepts the ACT and/or the SAT for admission requirements: ________________________________

____________________________________________________

Whether most of the students at your school live on campus or commute: ________________________________

What opportunities there are to work on campus: ________________________________

____________________________________________________

OTHER

Other information that may interest students: ________________________________

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________
BEFORE YOU VOLUNTEER

Know talking points about your college

Your favorite thing about your institution: ________________________________

______________________________

______________________________
College Preparatory Checklist

You can use this checklist as a reference for talking with students, or print it for students to use as a resource.

- Make school a priority. Go to school every day, on-time. If you are having trouble at home that prevents you from getting to school every day, talk to a teacher or counselor and let them know your situation.

- Develop good study habits. Pick a specific time and place to do your homework every day. If you don’t have homework, read a book, write a story, draw, or do a puzzle during your study time. Set goals with your homework. Make lists of all of the homework that you have and when it is due and check off assignments as they are completed. Keep all of your homework and assignments in a folder or notebook (same place every time) to help stay organized. Remember to turn in your assignments by the given due dates.

- Get good grades. Turn in all assignments, even if you do not fully understand them. Try your best to learn as much as possible. Know where your grades come from (tests, homework, participation, attendance, etc.).

- Read often. Read as often as possible from a range of types of texts, including books (fiction and nonfiction), newspapers, and magazines to increase your vocabulary.

- Ask questions. Don’t be afraid to ask questions when you don’t understand something. Chances are other students in your class have the same questions. Ask questions before tests or assignments (what you are unsure of) and after tests and assignments (about questions that you answered incorrectly).

- Ask for help when you need it. Don’t wait until you’ve failed a test or assignment to ask your teacher or your family members for help in a subject area. Don’t be afraid to say “I’m not sure how to do or begin this” or “I am not sure what questions to ask, but I don’t understand”. If there is no one at home that can help you, ask your teacher to help you find a mentor or a tutor.

- Participate in extracurricular activities. This includes sports, band, choir, book clubs, scouting and/or various clubs (anything available at your school or in your community). Doing this will give you opportunities to expand your experiences and will help you find out what you might like to participate in throughout middle and high school.

- Use the summer months to brush up on school subjects. Use study skills books or online resources. Join a reading program at your local library. Don’t let what you learned the previous year slip away. Prepare for the coming school year. Limit the amount of time you spend watching TV and playing video games. Draw, paint, read, write stories, help your family members or friends cook or work in the garden, create games for you and your friends to play, or read to your younger brothers, sisters, cousins, etc.
ACTIVITIES FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

The following activities are examples of things you can do with students to foster their awareness of college preparatory behaviors. Be empathetic, supportive, engaging, energetic, non-judgmental, understanding, creative and innovative! Activities can be tailored to any age and any length of service. The goal is that you actively do something to help students take steps toward postsecondary education. Help students feel comfortable with the different activities you have them do. Remain positive and supportive even if they refuse to be involved with the activity.

Length of Service

- **EVENT–BASED**: 1–day event or a week–long camp
- **SHORT TERM**: 12–15 week semester or several months
- **EXTENDED TERM**: 6 months or longer

Event–Based
(A 1–day event or a week–long camp, etc.)

College Event Field Trip

Take students to a college event, i.e., a basketball game, a football game, an art fair, etc. Talk about college attendance at the event, how they can live on campus and be a part of the college community, and that they can get involved with anything that interests them while in college. Invite other college students to participate in the event with you and the younger student(s). Encourage the college students to talk to the elementary student(s) and ask college positive questions.

“What Do You Want to Be When You Grow Up?” Activities

- Actively listen to students and ask questions about their futures; share your process of thinking about a future/occupation and picking a college.
- Do not respond negatively if a student shares that he/she wants to be like someone who is involved in illegal activities or deviant behavior. Try to identify what aspects of that lifestyle interest the student and steer the conversation toward careers that may generate interest in the student. Connect the career opportunities to ways in which they can help themselves, their families, and/or communities. Extract skills from the student’s initial interests to lead the student to awareness of a new type of career.
- Encourage them to think about future career paths. If they express no specific interest; ask them about what they like to do or what someone they admire does for a living (remember not to discourage or talk negatively about any profession).
- Research with the student what it will take to become successful in a particular field; the goal is to help students become aware of various types of careers and fields and help them to see these are attainable.
- Provide relevant role models by sharing examples of people who grew up in similar circumstances as the student who have become successful in careers that interest the student.
- Use magazines, newspapers, or websites to provide visuals and discussion starters for different types of careers. Reinforce the student’s interests by showing pictures or details about the field of interest.
Create a Poster with the Student

- Highlight a role model including information about his/her occupation and training, i.e., the college they attended, their field of study, etc.
- “What I want to be when I grow up.” Include information on the steps to get there.
- Favorite subjects and the types of careers associated with those subjects.
- If students are unwilling to create a poster, help them create it or create one that depicts your role model or what you want to do when you finish college. Help lead them if they are hesitant but do not be overbearing.

Read about Role Models

Get and read books about role models the students can relate to; discuss the career paths of the role models and the educational steps it takes to reach those goals. Emphasize how often hard work and determination are the key factors in someone becoming successful, despite their outside circumstances. When possible, do not choose “larger than life” role models (movie stars or sports stars), but research stories of “regular people” that achieved a successful career despite having an under-privileged background. The goal is not to present “fairy tale” situations that seem unattainable or hard to relate to.

Campus Visit

- Take students on a campus tour or arrange a tour for them. Include locations on the tour that would interest young students, i.e. the student center, football field, basketball arena, student center, theater, dormitory, dining hall, etc. Arrange for them to interact with college students, and perhaps give the students a college t-shirt, keychain, cup, hat, pennant, or poster. Include a colorful college brochure with the give-a-way item.
- Take the time to research what different universities have to offer beyond traditional campus tours. For example, South Florida State College hosts what is called the Summer Bridge Program. This program specifically focuses on first-generation college students who will enter grades 10-12. The Summer Bridge Program emphasizes improving math, reading and writing skills, preparing for the ACT, learning the value of college education and how to apply for college (www.southflorida.edu/academic/summer-bridge). Other universities may have similar programs so research and call to find programs on campuses that cater to different populations of students.
- Try to set up meetings in advance with professors to meet with you and the student(s). Find professors from fields in which your student(s) have shown interest and research the faculty. Faculty may vary in how they accommodate the needs of your students.
- Rather than merely being observers, give students the option of getting involved in events that are available to college students. This involvement will generate a more memorable experience for many of the students who choose to participate.

Virtual Campus Tour

If you can’t take students on a physical tour, take them on a virtual tour of a range of institutions, i.e., 4-year schools, 2-year schools, and vocational, technical, and business schools. Look for resources on a college’s website or on www.campustours.com.
Good Habits Poster

Explain to students that they need to begin to develop the good habits and self-discipline they will need to be successful in college. Have them create a list of “College-Bound Behaviors.” If you have time, create a poster of the list of behaviors. Share your own personal habits that you have learned and developed to become successful in school and/or eventually translated into skills you use in college. Do not generalize but take time to explain the steps on how you developed these skills and were able to maintain them over time.

Peer Discussion

Gather a small group or class for discussion on how to foster good study habits at home. Students can discuss obstacles that prevent them from studying or completing assignments and assist each other in brainstorming solutions. To ensure a safe environment for struggling students, you might gather typical obstacles that students are facing from private discussions. You can then be the one to introduce these anonymously into the discussion. For example, you might mention that you know sometimes it can be hard to concentrate on your homework when you have younger siblings that “bug” you and ask the group if they have any solutions to this problem. That way, the student(s) with the sibling problem do not have to be singled out or have the courage to speak up, but can still hear possible solutions.

Short Term

(Longer than an event: a 12–15 week semester or several months)

Film/TV/YouTube Discussion/Interviews

- Work with the students to select films that show individuals overcoming obstacles and succeeding, or films on historical figures. If possible, show films with characters of the same ethnicity or culture as the students but make sure to be culturally sensitive. After the films have been shown, discuss the steps the hero or heroine took to overcome obstacles and the character traits that allowed them to persevere. Make sure to discuss the film with students, maybe even stopping throughout the film to question how the student relates to the film.
- Show students short but powerful YouTube clips of contemporary autobiographies or stories about people who overcame obstacles (preferably similar to the ones the students may face) by empowering themselves through education.
- Try to find interviews of the creator(s) of some of their favorite cartoons, TV shows, or movies where they may share their educational background or you can introduce their educational background so they may see the connection between education and shows they like to watch.
- Similarly, find interviews of people who have contributed to the neighborhood in which the student lives, such as government officials, local business owners or service workers. If possible, arrange for yourself and the student to actually conduct an interview with such a person, making sure to question the person how education played a role in getting them to their current position.
**Guest Speaker**

Invite guest speakers from the community to meet with the student(s) to talk about their profession and training. Let the students participate in the process of speaker selection when possible. Have the students select a few careers they might be interested in. If you are unable to find community members to speak, use other resources. For example, try a local community college, university, organization, or business who knows the community or are from the community who may come and speak to the students.

**Team Games**

Play games with the students and name teams after local colleges; you may want to have one team represent your institution. Become familiar with what different colors represent for the students in the school and community. Sometimes colors are directly connected to gangs or other group affiliations that may have negative consequences or negative responses from some students if worn. If you find that specific colors should be avoided, then wear a neutral color that represents the university.

- Play indoor or outdoor games, like charades, relay races, sports, ice breakers, or party games.
- Separate the students into two teams, such as Florida Atlantic University and University of Florida. Have the students create posters or banners for their teams that reflect the logos and colors of each institution. Go to the college websites to show the students the logos of each institution or print the logos beforehand. If you can plan in advance, have students wear clothing to school or the event to match the colors of their university team if the colors are appropriate to wear in the school.
- While setting up the university teams, share facts about going to college and about each institution which may require research prior to meeting the students.
- Academic games such as spelling games, around the world with math, or concentration.
- Group building games like the knot game (stand in circle, grab hands from across the circle, try to unknot without letting go of hands).

**Tutor**

Help students with projects or homework. Emphasize that good grades are important when planning to attend college or any postsecondary training program. Use and exemplify study habits, tools for organization, strategies for completing assignments in a timely manner, methods to stay focused, etc. Make the connection for students between good grades and receiving free money (scholarships) as incentives to instill the importance of good grades for college. Give them examples of scholarships based on grades and how much money can be awarded. Have discussions with the student to ascertain their home study environment and habits. Without judging or criticizing the student's family or living situation, help strategize with the student how to overcome barriers in order to create good study habits at home. This will take sensitivity and flexibility on your part, but often a student is the most capable of developing appropriate solutions if someone takes the time and interest to explore an issue. Truly listening to the student, and simply asking clarifying questions that may lead them to an idea/solution is much more powerful than offering a stream of pre-determined or “one size fits all” solutions based on your own experience.
Write Career Stories

Assist students in writing and illustrating a two–part book with the theme, “When I Grow Up I Could Be…” Have the student identify three to five possible career paths and the training needed for each occupation.

- Part I: What I like to do, what I am good at, and/or what I think I would like to do…
- Part II: Because I like to (what's listed in Part I)… when I grow up, I could be a…

If the student is not comfortable sharing what he/she wants to do as a grown up or makes statements of not having any future aspirations, then take initiative and introduce a variety of careers. Ask the student to share something he/she has seen on TV or in a movie that was enjoyable. Connect what is shared to college and how the student can major in or get involved in things that will allow interests to become careers that pay for doing something interesting and likable.

Magazine Careers

Have students cut pictures from magazines of people in different occupations. Ask students to select a career that seems interesting from the assortment of magazine pictures. Use a digital camera to take a picture of each student and help students place their faces over the faces in the magazine. If a digital camera is unavailable have students draw pictures of themselves. Ask students to write sentences or a paragraph explaining why they selected the occupation and what type of training is needed to be successful in that field. If the students are reluctant to put themselves as part of the magazine picture, have them take a picture next to the items they have cut out from the magazine so at least they have a picture of them in the process.

Career Brainstorm

- Students are often simply unfamiliar with the wide-range of available careers. A young student often is aware of highly visible careers like sports/movie stars or firefighters, and careers they come into frequent contact with like doctors or teachers. Begin with such a career that the student is interested in, then help them to brainstorm the myriad of careers associated with it. For example, a sports newscaster. Draw a sketch of the newscaster at the anchor desk, then begin to discuss all the other people “behind the scenes” such as writers, editors, camera operators, directors, technicians, etc. Place these people on the sketch and discuss what roles they play in the overall production.
- Another way to introduce students to a range of careers is to create collages of places they may like to visit, such as the zoo. Gather pictures, draw, or simply write brief descriptions of all the various positions people do to make the zoo run. Allow the student to place these on a map or diagram of the zoo while you discuss the various jobs.
- If there is an opportunity to take the student to a place of business, you could provide a career brainstorm field trip. Tour the student around the company and point out all the different roles/careers that the employees have.

College Bookmarks

Make bookmarks for different colleges. Help students research state institutions to find their logos. During the exercise, discuss fun facts about each institution, i.e. interesting facts about where they are located, how many dorms they have, dorm life, the school mascot, the records of sports teams, etc. Be prepared to take a hands-on approach with students if they are confused about how to navigate through a university’s website or how to specifically find information that they may find interesting.
College Fun Facts

Conduct a map reading exercise in which students identify the location of colleges within their state, country and/or city/town where the university they have selected is located. Ask students to draw a map (or use a pre-drawn map) to mark where schools are located. Allow students to investigate and learn about the area to compare and contrast it with their own communities. Help students find interesting things about the area so they can see positive aspects of the many different communities surrounding universities. Teach the students how they can compare and contrast university communities from their own (e.g. urban or rural). Help students look up key facts about each school and write about or list their findings. Give an opportunity to share/present the map.

Extended Term

(A longer term commitment: 6 months, a year, or longer)

Peer Support Group

Host a small group that meets regularly for discussion on how to foster good study habits at home. Students can discuss obstacles that prevent them from studying or complete assignments and assist each other in brainstorming solutions.

Peer Tutoring Group

Students can lend support to each other if given the time and space to meet with adult supervision.

College Positive Rewards

Look for opportunities to encourage and reward students when they exhibit a college positive behavior, i.e. get good grades, complete a project, or have a leadership moment. Set goals for specific projects and/or grades and reward those goals with college-related items, such as t-shirts, hats, stickers, mugs, pennants, key chains, and posters (you can sometimes get these items donated by the admissions office, special academic support departments, or bookstores at your university). Be supportive if a student does not perform well in school or if he/she has behavioral issues in a class. You may be the only person the student has that is willing to listen, so be empathetic while helping them focus their efforts back on their school work. Remember that goals of all sorts can be set and met thus set obtainable goals to help build the student’s confidence.

Awards Event

Create an award system, and possibly an awards event, for students who excel or make marked improvement. Clearly establish the achievement goals, i.e. increase the letter grade for a subject, get a set quantity of A’s and B’s on a report card, get points for each specific grade (you can even award low achieving students if their grade increases), etc. Outline the goals in a contract for students to sign. Students who meet and/or exceed the goals get rewarded with college gear or a pizza party. Invite the students’ families and friends to the award ceremony.

Help ensure that students not meeting any goals do not feel alienated or ostracized from the rest of the class. Make some goals obtainable by a variety of students and abilities (short and long term goals). Spend time with the students to help them find ways to reach the goals set for them in the future and set personal goals.
ACTIVITY:
A Display/Bulletin Board about College Grads

Objective:
To help students “see” college as a goal, to help them understand the connection between college educations/majors and various jobs, and to help them understand what college is like.

Instructions:
1. Ask students to gather pictures of friends, family members, mentors, teachers, guidance counselors, teacher assistants, youth advocates, administrators, etc. wearing caps and gowns at college graduations. An alternative might be to invite a group of adults to the classroom which bring pictures and are prepared to speak about their experiences.

2. Have the student interview this person if possible, or interview another college graduate by using their own questionnaire or the one below.

3. On the display/bulletin board, attach: 1) a picture of the person; 2) a visual representation of his/her college, i.e. a picture of the college logo, a pennant, or something the student has drawn; and 3) a completed questionnaire. Place the display in a hallway or classroom, and possibly have the students present their college research to the class.

Interview Questions:

Your job: ________________________________________________________________

Your degree(s): _________________________________________________________

Where you went to college: _____________________________________________ State: ______________

The number of years you went to college: _________________________________

The hardest obstacle you had to overcome to get to college: __________________

Why you thought you’d never make it to college and what changed your mind: ________________________________________________________________

Some fun things you did in college (i.e., activities, student groups, clubs, sports, etc.): _____________________________________________________________
What you liked most about college and why:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Your favorite professor/teacher and why:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Your favorite subject and why:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
READING MATERIALS FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Below is a list of books that can be used to support discussions about personal aspirations and careers. The list begins with several fiction books that will work for all age groups, although some of the books are picture-based. Following each book title is the author(s)’s name, followed by the publisher’s name and the publication date, unless otherwise noted.

To the following list, you can add any biographical books about individuals from students’ ethnic/cultural groups, i.e., individuals who have overcome odds, who have worked to gain education and/or success in their fields, etc. Check with your local library (or the one at the school the K–5 students attend) for a list of such books, and for additional career-related books.

**Grades K–5**


Note: Good for discussions about “you can be anything.”


Note: Great for discussions about following dreams.


*Unstoppable Me: 10 Ways to Soar Through Life*. Dr. Dwayne Dyer (author and publisher) 2006.

Note: Good for helping students believe in themselves.


*Oliver Button is a Sissy*. Tomie dePaola. Harcourt and Brace, 1979.

Note: Excellent book for students of all ages to encourage them to do what’s right for them, not others.


Note: Good for discussions about believing in yourself.


Note: Good for discussions about self-efficacy for students of any age.

**Grades K–3**

*A Day with a Doctor*

*A Day with an Electrician*

*A Day with Firefighters*

I Want to Be a Builder
I Want to Be a Musician
I Want to Be a Nurse
I Want to Be a Pilot
I Want to Be a Teacher


POETRY SUGGESTIONS


INFORMATIONAL TEXTS SUGGESTIONS


A Tree is a Plant (Let’s-Read-And-Find-Out Science). Clyde Robert Bulla. Perfection Learning, 2010.


Grades 4–5

A Day in the Life of a Dentist
A Day in the Life of a Doctor

Note: Good for young girls; females are on the covers of each of the books.


POETRY SUGGESTIONS


INFORMATIONAL TEXT SUGGESTIONS


Grades 5–6

Career Ideas for Kids Who Like Adventure
Career Ideas for Kids Who Like Animals and Nature
Career Ideas for Kids Who Like Computers
Career Ideas for Kids Who Like Math and Money
Career Ideas for Kids Who Like Music

Discovering Careers for Your Future (Computers, Art, Health, Math, etc.—a different book for each field)


Note: Humorous book than can be used to promote discussions about good study habits; author/illustrator has an inspiring personal story about being told by one of his art teachers that he could not draw. Other school-related books are available by the same author.

College Preparatory Checklist

You can use this checklist as a reference for talking with students, or print it for students to use as a resource.

- Make school a priority. Go to school every day, on-time. If you are having trouble at home that prevents you from getting to school every day, talk to a teacher and/or counselor and let them know your situation.

- Develop good study habits. Select a place and time to study each day. Start with small blocks of time (e.g. 30 minutes). As you become more comfortable with studying, increase the amount of time. Make a list of assignments and their due dates. Check off assignments as they are completed. Keep all of your homework and assignments in a folder or notebook (same place every time) to help stay organized. Remember to turn in your assignments by the given due dates.

- Get good grades. Turn in ALL assignments even if you think you did not do well on the task. Know where your grades come from (tests, homework, classroom participation, attendance, etc.).

- Take advantage of opportunities that may exist to help strengthen your grades. Your school may provide after-school tutoring, mentor programs, or other activities that can offer needed help. If you are embarrassed or experience peer pressure to not participate in such activities, confide in a caring adult at school. They may be able to help you devise a solution to getting the help you need, without having other people know your business.

- Look for free resources in your neighborhood for homework help and tutoring such as community centers or churches. Look on the internet or ask a school counselor about such places.

- Take classes you find challenging. Whenever possible, sign up to take the most advanced subjects, such as math, English, foreign language, etc.

- Find material you like to read and read for enjoyment. Try reading magazines, newspapers, novels, blogs, memoirs, etc. Read often and a range of texts, including books (fiction & nonfiction) to increase your vocabulary.

- Ask questions when you don’t understand something and or need help. It is easy to ask for help and telling your teacher that you do not understand something will not impact your grade negatively. Don’t wait until you’ve failed a test or assignment to ask your teacher or your family members for help in a subject area.

- Participate in extracurricular activities, including sports, band, choir, student government, and various clubs (drama, debate, chess, etc.). Doing this will give you opportunities to expand your experiences and will help you find out what you might like to participate in when you’re in high school.

- If you have time during the school year and/or summer, volunteer with a local organization or school. Volunteering can be fulfilling and fun and is good experience to strengthen your application for college.
Use the summer months to brush up on school subjects. Use study skills books or online resources. Join a reading program at your local library. Don’t let what you learned the previous year slip away, and prepare for the coming school year. Limit the amount of time you spend watching TV and/or playing video games. Draw, paint, cook, plant a garden, and create games for you and your friends to play. Read, play math games, or do puzzles.

**At the End of 8th Grade**

- Meet with your high school guidance counselor (name): __________________________

- Make sure you take the right college preparation classes during your high school years. Take the most advanced classes possible and find out if there are any other college preparation steps you need to take. If you struggle with a particular class, ask your guidance counselor for summer school opportunities or available tutoring in your district to get additional help.

- Ask your high school guidance counselor what type of clubs, volunteering opportunities, sports teams, academic teams, etc., are available. Your guidance counselor can help you plan your schedule to accommodate extracurricular activities or work while in high school.
ACTIVITIES FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

Be creative and innovative! Activities can be tailored to any age and any length of service. Review the previous section, “Activities for Elementary Students,” as many of those activities can be used for middle school students. The goal is that you actively do something to help K–12 students take steps toward postsecondary education.

Length of Service

- **EVENT–BASED**: 1–day event or a week–long camp
- **SHORT TERM**: 12–15 week semester or several months
- **EXTENDED TERM**: 6 months or longer

**Event–Based**

(A 1–day event, a week–long camp, etc.)

“What Do You Want to Be When You Grow Up?” Activities

- Actively listen and question students about their futures. If the students do not share any future aspirations, ask them what they enjoy doing or are interested in learning more about. This will help to create positive scenarios regarding their futures.
- Talk to students about potential career paths and the steps it takes to get there. Share your career plans with students and what steps you plan to take to get there.
- Explore this career alternatives website with the student: [www.bls.gov/k12](http://www.bls.gov/k12)
- Visit [www.mappingyourfuture.org](http://www.mappingyourfuture.org) with the student; click on “Middle/HS Students.”
- Visit [www.knowhow2go.org](http://www.knowhow2go.org). Click on “Middle & High School Students.”
- Go to [www.flchoices.org](http://www.flchoices.org) and click on the “Career Planning” tab and then “Explore Careers.”

**Discuss Advanced Classes**

Take time to explain that getting the highest grades possible will help strengthen college applications and increase chances of acceptance to college and the reception of scholarships (free money). Explain to students that if they are comfortable and confident with their understanding of a specific subject they should consider taking advanced classes in that area. Advanced courses will be more challenging and will benefit them with being better prepared for high school and eventually, college classes.

Try to arrange a meeting with a teacher who teaches an advanced course in the middle school with a subject that the student has interest. With the permission of the student and teacher, attend the meeting to support the student and ask questions to help the student. This meeting will provide the student a better understanding of what teachers expect and what type of work is given in advanced classes. If there is a syllabus or class agenda, ask if you and the student can have a copy. If the teacher agrees, ask the student if he/she would like to sit in on an advanced class to observe how the class functions.
After introducing students to the idea of advanced classes, ask them how they feel about taking this type of class. Be supportive and encourage them to challenge themselves with advanced courses if they are comfortable. If they are unsure, be supportive and help them focus on their current classes to achieve the highest grades possible. Once students have shown improvement or achieved high marks in their classes, revisit the idea of enrolling in an advanced class for the following term or year.

Talk about Your College

To help students identify with you and the school you attend, talk about your college/university. Fill out “Talking Points about Your College” on page 16. If possible, give students an item from your school, such as a t-shirt, hat, cup, pennant, keychain, etc.

Sports Games

Play games and name teams after colleges in Florida or the mascots of those colleges. If you don’t know the name of the college mascots, look them up with the students. Show highlights from YouTube or the internet of your university’s sports teams or mascots.

Discuss College Life

Share your experiences (be mindful of appropriate versus inappropriate experiences) in college. Examples of appropriate experiences include a positive surprise about college, what you wish you would have known about college life before you started, your most memorable moments of college thus far, what has helped make you a successful college student, etc. Be authentic in what you share and be sincere as you elaborate on your college life experience. Review your school newspaper, admission guides, brochures, etc. with the students and discuss college life, activities, and admission processes.

The Importance of Adults

Speaking with adults is very important but before you encourage students to speak with adults, help identify adults that would be receptive to the needs of the students. In some cases if the adults with which they speak are not aware of the situation or challenges the students face, they may unknowingly alienate or discourage at-risk students from pursuing postsecondary training.

Encourage students to talk to their counselors, parents or guardians (if applicable), and/or other adults important in their lives about pursuing postsecondary training after high school. If the students feel they don’t have access to an adult, help them by contacting different adults that you think would be appropriate for them to speak with about postsecondary training after high school.

Campus Visit

Invite students to your campus for lunch or an on-campus activity or event. A campus visit checklist can be found on pages 69-70.

Virtual Campus Tour

- Take students on a virtual tour of your campus. Find out if your school has an online tour. Visit your school’s website or www.campustours.com. Take virtual tours of other colleges in Florida or other states.
Check YouTube or other internet sources for videos like “Campus Cribs” to give more popular culture-based virtual
tours for students if you feel it would be beneficial. ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=JeivOJVBQsE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JeivOJVBQsE))

**Pre–College Programs**

Explore pre–college programs or summer camps that are available on your campus. Research the programs to gather
program qualification requirements for students. Find out the details of direct and incidental costs for participating in
the program. If there are direct costs for students to participate, ask if there is a fee waiver or another form of financial
aid for students who may not be able to afford to pay the program cost. Some examples of incidental costs are the costs
of transportation, meals, lodging, or any other personal costs that students may incur. Once you have determined all
potential costs and have gathered resources to reduce the cost for the student, let him/her know about the programs and
help them sign up, if possible.

## Short Term

(_longer than an event, like a 12–15 week semester or several months_)

### Career Path

Ask students what careers they are interested in pursuing for their future. If they do not share ideas or interest in any
future careers, ask them what careers they may be curious about or complete the career brainstorming activities listed in
the elementary activities section on page 25 which can be easily modified to a higher age group.

Discuss potential financial earnings or educational or training requirements for specific careers. Research with the
students what it will take to have a career in a particular field by reviewing employment ads online at sites like [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com) or [www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com). Highlight the connection between careers and educational requirements with
salaries of specific positions to reinforce the connection between education and monetary compensation.

Introduce students to fringe benefits or employer benefits. Define these terms if needed to help the student understand
what they are and how they impact people's lives. Give examples of fringe benefits, for example, employer contributions
toward retirement, medical insurance, dental insurance, life insurance, and/or other benefits offered by employers. Fringe
benefits can have a significant impact on lives and it is important to share this with students to connect how higher levels
of education often result in better opportunities for high paying careers with supportive fringe benefit for employees.

To ensure that students understand the importance of education for their career path, play a game of compare and
contrast with the students. Have students search for high paying careers that require a bachelor's degree or higher while
you search for lower paying careers that do not require a college degree. Focus on the difference in pay and the gap in
fringe benefits between the careers.

Next, talk about the many non-monetary benefits of different career paths. For example, some career paths may be
physically demanding, taking a toll on one's body over time. Certain career fields are more physically accommodating.
Other jobs may not offer daily satisfaction leaving much stress, frustration, etc. However, there are many careers that can
be very satisfying. Everyone has different desires with their careers and it is important to remember the many facets of
benefits beyond financial compensation.
**Tutor**

Help students with projects or homework emphasizing that good grades help significantly when planning to attend college or any postsecondary training program. Take time to explain that it is okay if they are not fond of a specific subject but that their objective should be to try their best to understand the subject matter while aiming for the highest grade possible. If further help is needed you can assist by seeking out available resources for free tutoring services for students within their schools, community, local community college, or non-profit organizations.

You may encounter that students are reluctant to utilize tutoring services due to a perceived stigma or peer pressure. If you’ve developed rapport with the student and feel the conversation is appropriate, discuss the student’s reluctance and help them to devise solutions. It may be appropriate to help the student realize that his/her goals and priorities can take precedence over others’ opinions of them. In addition to academic tutoring, you might direct students to counseling resources or texts that deal with themes of building self-esteem and standing for one’s beliefs in the face of criticism.

**Peer Discussion**

Described in detail in the elementary activities section (page 21), this suggestion is applicable to middle school students as well. Do not forget the power that students have to resolve obstacles in their own lives when adults give them space and encouragement to seek solutions from their own wisdom. Teenagers are often more likely to take up suggestions made by their peers than those from adults, so this can be a valuable tool if conducted in an appropriate manner in which students are not singled out or put on the spot.

**Read a Book**

Recommend that students read books about individuals who have overcome obstacles and succeeded, and/or have students read non-fiction texts about potential career fields. Discuss and have students create short reports, lists or posters about the books they have read.

**One on One with a College Student**

Plan an outing (i.e. a campus tour, a sports event, etc.) where middle school students can interact with college students on a one–on–one or small group basis. Have the student explore the careers they may be interested in and if possible, pair them with a college student going into that field.

**Career Scrapbook**

Work with students to create a career notebook/scrapbook. After completing career brainstorming activities, have students identify 10 possible careers they might be interested in pursuing. Let the students create information sheets/collages about each career with pictures of individuals doing the job or pictures of something related to the job. Ask students to provide a brief paragraph about or description of the job responsibilities of a person in the field, information about the type of required career training and how long the training lasts, and the name of a few colleges or universities that provide the training. Review the notebook/scrapbooks with students to discuss possible career paths. If they are reluctant to do this on their own, take initiative and create your own scrapbook as an example for them so they see that you are also a part of this activity.
Career Inventory:
Initiate discussions with students about potential career paths by having them complete the Career Inventory included in the resources section of this toolkit on Possible Career Paths A Self Inventory on pages 75–81.

College Fun Collage
Create a collage of the fun things you can do in college: study abroad, attend sports events, fraternities or sororities, participate in community service, live in a dorm, etc. As you help them create the collage, explain the different categories (e.g. study abroad, fraternities, etc.), how they function and their purpose at your university.

Online Personality Test
Have students take a free online personality test. Explain that these tests provide ways to think about future careers. There are no absolutes about what one can or must do but some of the sites are just fun ways to get youth thinking about their futures.

- [www.funeducation.com](http://www.funeducation.com) Students should visit this site with their parents'/guardians' permissions because address information is requested.
- [www.kidzworld.com](http://www.kidzworld.com) Search: “Careers.” This site has two kid-friendly, short quizzes with fun questions.
- [www.career.missouri.edu](http://www.career.missouri.edu) Click on “Career Interests Game” under the “Quick Links” section on the bottom of the page. It’s a little complex, but provides interesting information about personality types and careers. It’s best suited for older middle school students.

Extracurricular Encouragement
Encourage students to participate in extracurricular activities through their middle and high school years. Such activities include sports, band, drama, student government, community service, and other leadership opportunities. If you were a part of any of extracurricular activities while in high or middle school, share your experiences with the students and describe how they helped you with college. If the students are hesitant to join or explore an extracurricular activity, offer to accompany them to different offered opportunities and help them select one of interest to join at their middle school and/or high school. If possible and the student approves, join them in signing up for a chosen extracurricular activity to help him/her develop a strong pre-college portfolio.

Online College Scavenger Hunt
If you have access to computers, let students participate in a scavenger hunt about colleges. A sample exercise about colleges in Florida can be found on pages 71-73.

Role Model Study
Have students study the life of a famous individual or a role model: What is the person’s occupation? What training did he/she need for that occupation? What characteristics made that individual a success? Why did the student choose that particular individual? How can the student follow in the individual’s footsteps?
Extended Term

(A longer term commitment: 6 months, 1 year, or longer)

Students Invite Speakers

Have students decide which careers they are interested in and help them find and invite individuals in the field to come speak to their class. Before visiting with the students, be sure to notify the speaker of any crucial information or special needs regarding the students with which they will speak during their visit. The speaker can talk about his/her career, steps toward the career, as well as how to study, interview, show self-confidence, etc.

Famous Person Film Series

Obtain student input regarding the individuals they would like to learn about. Show a film on the desired individuals and discuss the traits that helped them achieve their goals. Select films (with the approval of a teacher or other school official) regarding famous individuals that focus on behaviors or actions that contributed to negative activities or consequences and how these decisions and choices impacted their lives. Look for other films that highlight the challenges famous individuals faced and how they overcame obstacles to become successful. Discuss alternative choices the characters could have made to experience different results.

College Positive Rewards

Look for opportunities to encourage and reward the student when he/she does a college positive behavior, i.e., gets good grades, complete a project, or has a leadership moment. Set goals for specific projects and/or grades and reward those goals with college-related items, such as t-shirts, hats, stickers, mugs, pennants, key chains, or posters. (You can sometimes get these items donated by the admissions office, special academic support departments, or bookstores at your university.) Be supportive if the student does not perform well in school or has any behavioral issues in a class. You may be the only person the student has that is willing to listen, so be empathetic while helping them focus their efforts back on their school work. Remember that goals of all sorts can be set and met thus set obtainable goals to help build the student's confidence.

What Color Is Your Parachute for Teens (or similar career guide books):

If funds allow for the purchase of materials, work with students to complete the reading, exercises, and worksheets in a career guide/manual for teens. These publications walk students through self-assessments to identify skills and possible careers, help students identify a college major, and provide job hunting tips.

Peer Support Group

Host a small group that meets regularly for discussion on how to foster good study habits at home. Students can discuss obstacles that prevent them from studying or complete assignments and assist each other in brainstorming solutions.

Peer Tutoring Group

Students can lend support to each other if given the time and space to meet with adult supervision.
Career Presentation to Family

Host an event for students, their parents/guardians, and families in which students give presentations about their research of particular career paths. If the student has no parent/guardian/family, gather a group of teachers/counselors/social workers that are important to the student or invite a small group of other CPV’s to be the audience for the presentation. Also, allow the student to invite friends or others that may be supportive. Recommend that the students dress their roles for their presentation. Have the students do research on careers they may be interested in. The research could include:

- Why the student chose the career
- The schooling required for the profession
- Which college(s) the student might attend and why
- What the student could accomplish in the field, e.g., a student who wants to be a teacher could aim for being “Teacher of the Year” in Florida or nationally, or could aim for establishing a particular after-school club or training; a doctor could choose to work on a cure for juvenile diabetes
- Individuals who have done something great in this area, e.g., the student could conduct research about the most current “Teacher of the Year”; the future doctor could find out who made the latest breakthrough in the fight against juvenile diabetes, etc.

The goal of this project is to encourage students to think big. Because this is a venue in which students, families, relatives, close friends, teachers/counselors/social workers they respect, and other CPV’s can attend, the final speaker for the night could be someone from the financial aid office of your school to explain how to explore alternatives for paying for college and/or how to make the students’ aspirations possible to the students’ parents/guardians/social workers.
Reading Materials for Middle School Students

Below is a list of books that can be used to support discussions about personal aspirations and careers. The list begins with several fiction books that will work for all age groups, although some of the books are picture–based. Following each book title is the author(s)’s name, followed by the publisher’s name and the publication date, unless otherwise noted.

To the following list, you can add any biographical books about individuals from students’ ethnic/cultural groups, i.e., individuals who have overcome odds, local success stories, people who have worked to gain education and/or success in their fields, etc. Check with your local library (or the one at the school the middle school students attend) for a list of such books, and for additional career-related books.

Grades 6–8


Note: Humorous book than can be used to promote discussions about good study habits; author/illustrator has an inspiring personal story about being told by one of his art teachers that he could not draw. Other school–related books are available by the same author.


Some Fictional Readings for Reluctant Readers to Get them Reading!

Grades 6 – 8


Throughout Your High School Years

- Make school a priority. Go to school every day, on-time. If you are having trouble at home that prevents you from getting to school every day, talk to a teacher and/or counselor and let them know your situation.

- Get good grades. Research the minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) needed for acceptance for the college of your choice by searching the college’s website or asking for help. Once you know the needed GPA, set goals to elevate and maintain your GPA above the minimum to be a strong candidate for acceptance. Don’t skip classes as it could negatively impact your GPA. If your school doesn’t provide GPA on report cards, find out how to calculate it from your school counselor.

- Talk to your parents/guardians, relatives, mentors, teachers, or guidance counselor about college and options for paying for college.

- Visit your school counselor at the end of each school year (or during the first two weeks of a new school year) to make sure you are on track for high school graduation and college by taking the right courses and being aware of any key testing dates or deadlines. Ask questions about the process or details.

- Practice good study habits. Don’t wait until the last minute to begin working on an assignment or to study for a test. Cramming can get you into trouble when you get to college, which requires more in-depth subject knowledge. Check with your counselor about free tutoring available at your school and/or find a study buddy or study group to review your notes and talk with about what you are learning in your classes.

- Use resources available to you for homework help, counseling, or any other assistance you need to be successful in school. There are often free sources of tutoring through churches and community organizations. Speak to a trusted teacher or counselor about getting a mentor that can assist you and provide guidance. If studying is hard to do at home, develop a routine of going somewhere such as a library or coffee shop where you can concentrate.

- Do the right thing. Don’t get in disciplinary trouble or damage your good record of behavior. If you have made bad choices in the past, find out what you need to do to get your record clean. Follow through and do those things.

- If peer pressure or social stigmas are preventing you from doing/being your best at school, seek a trusted teacher or counselor to speak with. Even if you feel other teachers are “against” you, there is usually someone willing to listen to your side and guide you in being more successful in school. You might identify such a person at church or the community center.

- If you work part-time or full-time while in school, inform a teacher or counselor with whom you are comfortable. You may be able to get help with your academics if you are struggling to balance work and school.
Study for the college entrance examinations (ACT and SAT). Practice tests are available via many online resources. If you take assessment tests for the exams early, you can target areas needing additional practice. Like your GPA, look up what ACT or SAT scores are recommended and acceptable to be a strong candidate for acceptance to the university of your choice. Use this information to set goals to prepare for the tests. (See “All About the ACT and SAT” on page 56).

Participate in extracurricular activities like sports, drama, school choir, band, yearbook club, chess club, homecoming committee, student government, community or neighborhood events or activities, or activities at your place of worship. All of these things are positive additions for your college application.

Be a leader. Whenever possible, be on the leadership team for any activities you participate in.

Volunteer in your local community or for other civic projects, especially during your junior and senior years of high school. You can list these activities on college applications. (Taking care of a sick grandparent or younger siblings may be considered community service.)

Use the time between each school year to brush up on school subjects and read books, magazines, newspapers, websites, or anything of interest that helps practice reading! Your English teacher or local library may publish a recommended reading list.

See yourself as successful in school and in whichever career you are interested in pursuing. Think about obstacles you have overcome. If you believe, you will push through moments of difficulty and achieve your goals. Ask others about their successes and what it took to get them there. Ask questions!

Visit a couple of college campuses. Some colleges offer unique opportunities for visiting college campuses such as South Florida State College’s Summer Bridge Program. This program specifically focuses on first-generation college students who will enter grades 10-12. The Summer Bridge Program emphasizes improving math, reading and writing skills, preparing for the ACT and learning the value of college education and how to apply for college (www.southflorida.edu/academic/summer-bridge). Ask questions about anything you are not familiar with or about the process of going to college.

During Your Sophomore Year

At the beginning of the year, talk to your high school counselor about the upcoming PSAT test, the preliminary version of the SAT. Ask the counselor about your district’s practices and how to sign up for any tests.

Try to take an ACT and/or SAT preparation class over the summer before you enter your junior year. If you cannot, get a study guide from a bookstore, or library or visit www.act.org and www.sat.collegeboard.org; search for preparation classes.

Remember if you did not do well your freshman year academically you still have your entire sophomore, junior, and senior years to increase your GPA. Do not let a challenging freshman year or a low GPA from your freshman year discourage you because you have time to increase it and become more involved with school if you are willing to put in the effort. This effort will pay off when you are accepted to college and begin an unforgettable positive experience that will prepare you to be successful within a career of your choice.
During Your Junior Year

- Check with your high school counselor to make sure you are taking the proper courses to graduate.

- Begin studying for the ACT and/or SAT in the fall of your junior year. Your school may offer a course, you can take a course from an independent provider (usually for a fee), or you can get a study guide from a bookstore or library. Other resources include: www.actstudent.org, www.number2.com, www.march2success.com and www.princetonreview.com. Pay special attention to tips for success such as whether or not you lose points on the test for guessing at an answer. See the ACT / SAT sections on pages 56–59.

- Take the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) by the end of your junior year. Remember, this includes the ACT, and the ACT is used to determine eligibility for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program. You must meet certain requirements such as having a score of 29 on the ACT test or 1290 on the SAT test and 100 hours of community service for the Florida Academic Scholars. Visit www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/ssfad/bf/bfmain.htm for more information. Be sure to complete the section on the answer sheet to send your scores to the colleges you are interested in applying to and attending.

- If desired and/or if your scores from the PSAT indicate possible eligibility for a National Merit Scholarship (www.nationalmerit.org), take the SAT at least by the spring of your junior year so you will have time to take it again if you would like to improve your scores.

- Talk to your teachers, counselors, administrators, and/or college positive volunteers, regarding your career aspirations, academic interests, and location you would be comfortable living in so they may help you in the selection of 10 colleges you would like to attend. Once you have selected the schools, begin to explore the different schools’ websites to look at every aspect of what they have to offer their students. Ask your college positive volunteer to help you look for other resources that would help further inform you about the different schools you selected. If possible, begin exploring the idea of visiting some of the schools you have selected. If it is not feasible for you to visit a school, talk to your teachers, counselor, or other school official to explore any possibilities of receiving help to allow you to visit a school(s).

- Talk to your high school counselor about financial aid so that you will be familiar with the federal (FAFSA) and state financial aid forms that you will need to submit during your senior year. Visit the official federal and state financial aid website www.fafsa.ed.gov to familiarize yourself with the necessary steps to apply for financial aid. Remember that applying for FAFSA is free. Be aware there is only one real FAFSA website so be careful to avoid fraudulent websites that promise financial support.

- Between your junior and senior years, study for the ACT and/or SAT so that you can take or retake it in the fall, if applicable. If you do not do as well as you anticipated or had hoped, do not allow that to scare you away from retaking the exam. Assess what areas you struggled with on the exam and ask a teacher, counselor, or college positive volunteer if they can help you find a way to study in order to strengthen the area you need to improve.
During Your Senior Year

- Find out how you can take the FCAT if you missed it during your junior year. To find out if you are eligible to take the FCAT as a senior, visit fcat.fldoe.org/fcat.

- Take or re-take the ACT and/or SAT in the fall of your senior year so that you will have your results in time to apply for college (deadlines vary). Make sure you do not procrastinate, forget, or wait until the last minute to register for and take the ACT and/or SAT because if you miss the deadlines to apply for the colleges of your choice, you will not be able to apply again for 6 months to 1 year, depending on the school’s enrollment policies. Be sure to complete the section on the answer sheet of your tests or registration to have your scores sent to any colleges you are interested in applying to and attending.

- Work hard to earn good grades. You can’t let go of your college focus!

- Do the right thing. Don’t get in disciplinary trouble or damage your good record of behavior. If you have made bad choices in the past, find out what you need to do to get your record clean. Then, follow through and do those things.

- At the beginning of the school year seek out your favorite teachers, employers, etc. to ask for college recommendation letters. Teachers and employers can testify to a student’s character and work ethic that may not be apparent from academic transcripts. Be sure to inform the teacher or employer of any accomplishments or behaviors you would like them to highlight in their letter of recommendation.

- Make sure you submit applications to college by December. Check the colleges you are interested in attending to find out their specific application deadlines. Some colleges have early submission dates that start in October therefore acceptance can be announced by December.

- Complete your FAFSA as soon as possible after January 1 and prior to March 1. Also be aware of state and college deadlines for completing the FAFSA. While it is important to complete the FASFA early to be eligible for the maximum amount of aid, FASFA can be submitted at any time during the year.

- Take advantage of Florida College Goal Sunday where families can visit local colleges or universities and get help filling out financial aid forms. If your parents/guardians/families cannot attend, talk to your teachers, counselors, administrators, or other school officials about your situation of not having anyone to accompany you. They may have different ideas or solutions to help you attend Florida College Goal Sunday, go to www.navigatingyourfinancialfuture.org/CGS/FLORIDA/Home.aspx.
ACTIVITIES FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Be creative and innovative! Activities can be tailored to any age and any length of service. Review the previous sections, "Activities for Elementary and Middle School Students," as many of those activities can be used for high school students if slightly adapted. The only goal is that you actively do something to help K–12 students take steps toward postsecondary education. Keep in mind that at times you may be one of few people supporting the student’s aspirations to attend postsecondary education. This means that you must stay positive and supportive even when the student wants to give up on his/her desire to become a college student.

Length of Service

■ **EVENT–BASED**: 1–day event or a week-long camp
■ **SHORT TERM**: 12–15 week semester or several months
■ **EXTENDED TERM**: 6 months or longer

Familiarize yourself with the sections of this toolkit entitled “Ways to Pay for College” (page 60). It's important that you become aware of the alternate ways students can pay for their education. Encourage all students to pursue higher education without thinking they won't be able to afford it. Explain to them that they should talk to the counselors at their high schools and the financial aid personnel at the colleges they are interested in attending to find out more information about ways to finance their education. The sections in this toolkit about paying for college will give you a basic overview of possible alternatives you can discuss with students. Provide additional information about financial aid when possible. Some suggestions are included in the following sections.

**Event–Based**

*(Limited time interaction, a 1-day event, a week-long camp)*

**Show a Video on Your College**

Discuss student life and show a video (use an existing one or create one) of your college or university. If you have time to create your own video, use your friends to help you make it fun. You could also use any videos posted on your college website. Be sure to include on-campus resources for as many types of students as possible. For example, African-American and Latino fraternities and sororities, organizations that support LGBTQ students, and campus religious organizations. The idea is to highlight the diversity found within your university and what it offers people who may be interested in the specific organizations mentioned above.

**Virtual Campus Tour**

Take students on a virtual tour of your campus and other schools via [www.campustours.com](http://www.campustours.com) or use YouTube and utilize any videos about your school that will give them a tour of campus. Discuss some of the things first-year students would need to know such as how to buy books, where to go for registration information, etc.

**College Application Discussion**

Bring college applications and discuss the process and the components with students. Help students fill out a practice application that can be used as an example for other college applications.
Resources to Prepare for Standardized Tests

- Free practice tests for the ACT, at www.number2.com and www.march2success.com
- General information about tests, test taking tips, information about accommodations for students with disabilities, and other free and fee-based products, www.ACTStudent.org
- Preparing for the SAT, www.collegeboard.com/testing and www.march2success.com
- Look for other reliable resources that may be helpful for students preparing to take a standardized test.

Long-Term Mentor Connection

Connect the student to someone who might serve as a long-term mentor to offer ongoing academic guidance. Find someone who is receptive, non-judgmental, and understanding of the unique needs of the student.

Resource for Persons with Disabilities

Pacer Center: Champions for Students with Disabilities: www.pacer.org and type “college planning” in the search box for a list of resources.

Financial Aid Form Help

Provide the student with information about Florida College Goal Sunday, www.navigatingyourfinancialfuture.org/CGS/FLORIDA/Home.aspx; a day when students and parents can visit local colleges or universities and get help filling out financial aid forms. Financial Aid 101 is another good resource: bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college/financial-aid.

Discuss College Life

Review your school newspaper, admission guides, brochure, etc. with the student and discuss college life, activities, and admission processes. Describe how college is different from high school. Talk about how credit hours equate to time and money. Explain how 12 credit hours is considered full time at most colleges as opposed to 30+ hours as full time in high school. Talk about study time expected outside class. Discuss how colleges have many clubs and organizations where students can meet classmates with common interests and goals.

Importance of Adults

Encourage students to talk to their counselors, teachers, parents and other important adults in their lives about getting a college education after high school.

Financial Aid Options

Reinforce to students that they can get a college education, even if they are concerned about cost. Include in that discussion a review of the different types of colleges, i.e., two-year colleges, four-year colleges, and other career preparation institutions. Many students do not understand that a community college is funded by local tax dollars as well as state tax dollars and that is why they are less expensive than a state school. In return, most community colleges accept all students and then place them into classes based on entrance exams. Encourage students to seek out information from their counselors, the financial aid office at various colleges, and from the Internet. Discuss the possible funding options. See the “Ways to Pay for College” section on page 60.
Advocate

Volunteer to assist students in having conversations with teachers, counselors or other school personnel that the student may be intimidated to speak to alone. Connect the student with resources such as tutoring and/or counseling programs offered through school, local churches or community centers.

Advanced Class Discussion

Encourage students to replace classes with harder, more advanced classes whenever possible. The more difficult classes will better prepare students to take the college entrance examinations, the ACT and/or the SAT. Colleges take note that students were enrolled in more challenging courses when reviewing students’ transcripts. Tell students to talk to their counselors/teachers and parents/guardians/family member about taking the advanced classes. Remember to not be pushy. Focus on helping the student understand how the more challenging classes can have a positive impact with college. If they ultimately decide to not take advanced classes, remain supportive in helping them achieve the highest grade they can in their classes.

Options for At-Risk Students

Be sure students who do not feel confident with school understand that there are many different options for postsecondary training or education. For example, they can start with a 1-year certificate program where they learn a skill but are not required to take general education credits. After students feel success from completing a 1-year program, students could continue on with general education requirements to earn an associate’s degree then transfer to a university to earn their bachelor’s degree if they desire. Students who have been in foster care or adopted may be eligible for Florida’s tuition waiver programs. For more information visit the following websites: Florida Reach at www.myflfamilies.com/reach, North American Council on Adopted Children at www.nacac.org/adoptionsubsidy/factsheets/tuition.html and Explore Adoption at www.adoptflorida.org/contactPACounselor.shtml.

Online College Scavenger Hunt

If you have access to computers, let students participate in a scavenger hunt about colleges. A sample exercise about colleges and universitites in Florida can be found on page 71.

Short Term

(Longer than an event, like a 12–15 week semester or several months)

College Fair Attendance

Encourage students to attend college fairs. Find out schedules for college fairs in the local area. Plan to meet the student and his/her parent or guardian at the event if possible.

Campus Visit

Before setting up a campus visit, make sure that the students have reliable transportation or suitable transportation is provided for them to attend the visit. Schedule a campus visit for students and use the campus visit checklist on pages 69-70.
College Application Essay

Help students write a sample essay or critique the student’s actual college application essay. If the student does not have a specific school in mind, use the Internet to get an application from an institution to use as a template. Remind students that they should carefully write and re-write their essays to make sure they eliminate any errors (spelling and grammar check). Also encourage students to have others help them create a college application essay or review them, such as guidance counselors, school administrators, parents or guardians, and/or writing teachers.

Guest Speakers for Students and Their Parents/Guardians

Find speakers who are engaging, charismatic, and familiar with alternative education/at-risk students:

- A professional to talk about his/her career, career preparation and training.
- An EEO/Minority Recruitment Officer from your university, primarily for minority students.
- Someone from the Special Needs Office at your college if the students have disabilities.
- Someone from a special interest group on campus, i.e., a fraternity, sorority, an ethnic student group; to talk about some of the social/fun aspects of college life.
- A professor to discuss professor/student interactions, the role/responsibilities of a professor, what classes are like, and how they differ from teachers/teacher interactions that students are used to from high school.

Financial Aid Assistance

Take the student and his/her parent or guardian to the financial aid office at your school. If this isn’t an option, provide contact information for a person who can talk to the group about the financial aid process. You can also obtain handouts that may be needed for the financial aid process from the Financial Aid office at your school.

Alternate Routes of Payment

Remind students that there are alternate ways to pay for a college education. Review the section entitled “Ways to Pay for College” on page 60 with the student.

ACT and SAT Discussion

Discuss when students should take various college entrance examinations (ACT and/or SAT). See the “All About the ACT and SAT” section on page 56.

Tutor

Help students with projects or homework, emphasizing that good grades are important when planning to attend college or any postsecondary training program.

Resources for Standardized Tests

- Free practice tests for the ACT, www.number2.com and www.march2success.com
- General information about tests, test taking tips, information about accommodations for student with disabilities, and other free and fee–based products, www.ACTStudent.org
- Preparing for the SAT, www.collegeboard.com/testing and www.march2success.com
Florida public libraries, visit the website www.publiclibraries.com/florida.htm and search for a local library near you.

- Be sure to look for other resources that are reliable and helpful for students who are preparing to take a standardized test.

**Future Planning Websites**

- www.mappingyourfuture.org, click on “MS/HS”
- www.salliemae.com/plan-for-college
- www.collegeboard.com, click on “College Planning”
- www.studentaid.ed.gov
- www.educationplanner.org

**Choosing a College**

Discuss the process of choosing a college with students. Share how you chose your university and how many other schools you considered. If you only had one school in mind, then give examples of other people you know who may have applied to more than one school and how they chose the different colleges.

- Visit www.campustours.com to take a virtual tour and/or get information about U.S. colleges and universities.

**College Sports Event**

Attend a college sports event with students and invite other college students. Discuss college and extracurricular activities.

**Postsecondary Options**

Share your plans and how you chose your specific career/major. If you were unsure of what you wanted to do when you first started college or changed your major, share the experience. Many alternative education students/at-risk students think that college students have their majors/career choice/life all figured out by their freshmen year in college. This is not the truth for many college students and it is important to debunk this notion so students understand that it is okay to be undecided on a major or have a desire to explore different fields.

For an understanding of career paths and types of education and training options, go to www.ed.gov and type “Career Colleges and Technical Schools” in the search box then click on the first link.

- Visit Your Education Planner, www.educationplanner.com, and click on “Students” then scroll down to “Career Planning.”

**Extended Term**

(A longer term commitment, like 6 months, 1 year, or longer)

**“How to…” Training**

Conduct a training session on how to write a winning essay and/or how to get good recommendations for college applications.
Florida College Access Network

If you have access to a computer, be sure to check out the Florida College Access Network website at www.floridacollegeaccess.org. Navigate the portal with the students to familiarize them with the college preparation process. The site includes research, communication, advocacy and support. Check the site frequently throughout your work with the student. You can also visit The National College Access Network at www.collegeaccess.org.

Reward the Student

Look for opportunities to reward students for a job well done, e.g., any activity that helps them move closer toward higher education. When they do well in a class or for a school–related project, treat them to a pizza party or give them some college gear, such as a t-shirt, cap, mug, etc.

Peer Support Group

Host a small group that meets regularly for discussion on how to foster good study habits at home. Students can discuss obstacles that prevent them from studying or complete assignments and assist each other in brainstorming solutions.

Peer Tutoring Group

Students can lend support to each other if given the time and space to meet with adult supervision.

Tutor

Help students in a particular subject area or find someone else to help tutor the student. Good grades and study habits are helpful for acceptance to and success in college. Any efforts to support school success are CPV efforts.

Video Resumes

Help students who excel in sports or performance–based areas (i.e., the playing of an instrument, such as the violin; theatre, etc.) develop video resumes of their talents that they can burn to DVDs. These DVDs—which should include a label that has the student’s name and area of expertise—can be sent to the directors of the sports/performance departments at various colleges or universities along with a letter of interest that includes a request to be considered for a scholarship. Before sending the DVDs and letters of interest, work with the student to find schools with programs in their areas of expertise that are known to offer scholarships and/or schools with programs that are of interest to him/her. You could also help the student locate a contact person at the school and find out if that individual will accept the video DVD. If you are unable to help the student with the actual production of the video, you can at least help the student develop the “interest” letter and think through the type of performances the student should include in the video. The video should include an overview of the student’s competency and should reflect the type of skills the colleges or universities require and focus on in their programs.
Read and Discuss Books

Read books with students about famous or everyday individuals who have overcome obstacles, about what it takes to be successful in any field or area of life, or targeting reluctant readers. Discuss the books with the students at various intervals or after completion. Use the book as a springboard to establish a consistent form of communication with the student.

Some Readings for Reluctant Readers


All ABOUT THE ACT AND SAT

As part of the college application process, students must take at least one of two standardized tests, the ACT (originally the American College Testing Assessment Test) and/or the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test).

The ACT

The ACT measures what you know about the subjects you studied in school. According to ACT, Inc., the test includes the following:

- The ACT is administered on 6 test dates within the 50 United States and District of Columbia—in September, October, December, February, April, and June.
- The ACT is a national college admissions examination that consists of subject area tests in: English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science.
- The ACT Plus Writing includes the four subject area tests plus a 30-minute writing test.
- The ACT includes 215 multiple-choice questions and takes approximately 3 hours and 30 minutes to complete, including a short break (or just over four hours if you are taking the ACT Plus Writing). Actual testing time is 2 hours and 55 minutes (plus 30 minutes if you are taking the ACT Plus Writing).

Cost of the ACT (as of Spring 2014):

ACT (No Writing): $36.50 Includes reports for the student, the student’s counselor (if student authorizes reporting), and up to four college choices (if valid codes are provided upon registration).

ACT Plus Writing: $52.50 Includes reports for you, your high school, and up to four college choices (if valid codes are provided when you register). The $16.00 Writing Test fee is refundable, on written request, if you are absent on test day or switch to the ACT (No Writing) before testing begins.

Other fees may also apply. Visit the ACT website for more information: [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org).

NOTE: Some students are eligible to have test fees waived. Visit the websites for both tests for details.

- Fee waivers can be requested from the school guidance counselor
- Requirements to qualify for a fee waiver include: currently enrolled in 11th or 12th grade, U.S. citizen or testing in the U.S., U.S. territories, or Puerto Rico, meet one or more indicators of economic need listed on the ACT Waiver Form.

When to take the ACT

It is suggested students take the exam during their junior year. Taking the test during the junior year will allow time to take it again to improve scores and make any wanted adjustments to the student’s senior year curriculum. It can also be used to notify colleges of the student’s interests and score so that they will mail information about their schools, scholarships, etc. However the ACT testing organization states that the test can be taken at least two months ahead of the application deadlines for the colleges, which means the test can be taken during your senior year.

Sign up for the ACT

Registration can be done online or via mail. Registration should be completed at least 1½ months prior to the testing dates. For specific registration information, the student can visit the counseling office at his/her high school or the websites for each test: [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org).

13. [www.actstudent.org/faq/what.html](http://www.actstudent.org/faq/what.html)
14. [www.actstudent.org/registr/actfees.html](http://www.actstudent.org/registr/actfees.html)
The SAT

The test is administered by the College Board (www.collegeboard.org), a nonprofit membership organization. The test focuses on reading, writing and math, with a leaning towards logical reasoning and verbal skills. The College Board offers the following facts about the SAT.\(^\text{15}\)

The SAT is a national college admissions examination that:

- Is offered 7 times a year in the United States and 6 times a year at international sites;
- Assesses critical thinking and problem-solving skills in 3 areas: Critical reading, Mathematics, & Writing;
- Takes 3 hours and 45 minutes and three planned breaks are provided throughout the testing period;
- Consists of 10 separately timed sections (6 - 25 minute sections, 2 - 20 minute sections, a 25 minute essay, and a 10 minute multiple choice Writing section): three sections test critical reading (70 minutes total), three sections test mathematics (70 minutes total), three sections test writing (60 minutes total), one variable (unscored) section tests critical reading, mathematics or writing (25 minutes total);
- Includes three kinds of questions: multiple-choice questions (machine-scored), student-produced responses (mathematics only, machine-scored), and an essay question.

Check with the college you are interested in to find out which tests you should take to fulfill application requirements because additional SAT subject tests may also be required.

When to Take the SAT

Students can take the test as many times as they want. However, research shows that taking the test more than twice may not significantly improve the score. Many students take the test in March of their junior year so they can take it again in the fall of their senior year if needed.

Cost of the SAT (as of Spring 2014)\(^\text{16}\)

SAT: $51

SAT Subject Tests:
- $24.50 Basic Subject Test Fee (per registration)
- + $24 Language with Listening Tests (per test)
- + $13 All other Subject Tests (per test)

Other fees may also apply. Visit the SAT website for more information: www.collegeboard.com.

*NOTE: Some students are eligible to have test fees waived. Visit the websites for both tests for details. Waivers are typically issued to high school guidance counselors so ask at your school!*

Sign up for the SAT

Registration can be done online or via mail. For specific registration information, visit the counseling office of the high school or the websites for each test: www.collegeboard.com.

\(^{15}\) http://sat.collegeboard.org/about-tests/sat/faq

\(^{16}\) http://sat.collegeboard.org/register/us-services-fees
Which Test to Take

In the past, Midwestern schools in the U.S. more heavily accepted the ACT test while west and east coast schools preferred the SAT. Currently, most schools accept either test. Be sure to look up the testing requirements for each school of interest.

When possible, the student should take preliminary versions of both tests as a sophomore and/or junior. In addition, the student should try to complete full practice tests of both the ACT and SAT. If the student wants to limit his/her study focus, compare scores of both tests and focus on the test that will net the best possible score. In Florida, many sophomores take a free, preliminary version of the ACT called the ACT PLAN. It covers the same content areas as the full ACT but does not include a writing component. The test results reveal students’ strengths and weaknesses in various subject areas.

Students can take the fee–based preliminary version of the SAT, the PSAT, in either their sophomore or junior years. The National Merit Scholarship Program uses the results of the PSAT tests that students take in their junior year to determine if students are eligible for various scholarships.

Because the tests measure different things, some students may do better on one versus the other. The Princeton Review offers a list of pros and cons. Visit their site to read the seven differences they note between the two tests: [www.princetonreview.com/sat-act.aspx](http://www.princetonreview.com/sat-act.aspx). The site offers an assessment class that measures which test is right for each specific student. Students can also study for and take both tests.

How to Study for the Tests

There are multiple ways to study and prepare for the ACT and SAT. Below is a list of some preparation options:

- Take advanced classes to provide a knowledge base, habits, and skills for success on these tests.
- Take the preliminary tests, the ACT PLAN and the PSAT, when you are a sophomore and/or junior.
- Search the internet or books with sample tests and test-taking strategies. Visit websites [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org), [www.number2.com](http://www.number2.com), [www.march2success.com](http://www.march2success.com), [www.princetonreview.com](http://www.princetonreview.com) and your local public library ([www.publiclibraries.com/florida.htm](http://www.publiclibraries.com/florida.htm)).
- Purchase preparation software. Attend a preparation class. Get a one–on–one tutor.
- Look for resources that students may qualify for that would help them purchase or significantly reduce the cost of books, software, courses, or one-on-one tutoring.
- 4 Tests: [www.4tests.com](http://www.4tests.com); March 2 Success: [www.march2success.com](http://www.march2success.com); Number2.com: [www.number2.com](http://www.number2.com)
- The ACT: [www.ACTStudent.org](http://www.ACTStudent.org)
- The College Board, Preparing for the SAT: [www.collegeboard.com/testing](http://www.collegeboard.com/testing)
What to Expect on Testing Day

Talk to the student about things to expect on testing day (long lines so they need to arrive early, what to bring and not to bring to the test, policies [no hats, food, etc], calculators, registration [where to go, what to bring], etc.). The ACT and SAT websites offer excellent test day simulators that can help you prepare the student for test day expectations (http://sat.collegeboard.org/home).

Tips for Taking the ACT and/or SAT Tests

Provide as many tips as possible for taking the ACT or SAT tests. Remind the student to stay calm, monitor their testing pace, practice prior to the test, and be familiar with the sections of the test, their duration, and to be familiar with strategies for finding the correct answer. Try to help the student combat fear of the tests. Let the student know that it’s ok to not know all of the answers but to do what they know and then try to make a best educated guess on the rest. Help familiarize the student with test strategies such as when is it appropriate to leave questions blank versus taking a guess (will it help or hurt their score), process of elimination, etc. (www.actstudent.org/testprep/tips)
WAYS TO PAY FOR COLLEGE

Helping K–12 students make the decision to go to college is just one piece of the puzzle. The other piece—and a very important one—is to make sure they understand that there are alternate ways to pay for a college education. Underrepresented students often think college is not an option for them because they think they can’t afford it. College can be expensive; however, there are several available funding options for students and their parents/guardians.

This section of the toolkit includes an overview of available funding options and key information about the financial aid process that you can share with students and their parents/guardians. Reading this section will not make you a financial aid guru. It is designed to help you be a well-informed resource who can point individuals in the right direction, one that includes college as an attainable goal.

Family/Personal Savings

Use your discretion regarding any information you have learned about the student(s) with which you work before you present information. You may encounter an overwhelmingly large percentage of students whose families are in lower middle class, working class, or in poverty thus may struggle to afford any contribution to their children’s education. If you simply move forward assuming that their families can afford to contribute financially, you may offend or embarrass the student(s). Make sure you are informed before discussing this resource. If you feel it is appropriate to discuss this option, follow the advice below to help students understand how their families can help pay for school.

Some families prepare for their students’ college education by establishing a savings fund. The best way to do this is to start a savings account as soon as possible, right after a child is born. However, it’s never too late to begin saving. A good way for families to save for college is through a 529 Savings Plan. The plans are named after Section 529 of the Internal Revenue Code and are administered by state agencies and organizations. There are two types: pre-paid tuition plans and savings plans that offer tax advantages.

- Prepaid tuition plans allow individuals to pre-purchase the future college tuition of a student at current tuition rates. For more information about the Florida Prepaid College Plans visit www.myfloridaprepaid.com/what-we-offer. This plan allows parents, grandparents, businesses and others to pre-purchase undergraduate tuition for a child residing in Florida for any college or state university at current plan prices.

- Savings plans that offer tax advantages allow individuals to contribute to investment accounts in which earnings grow tax free (federal and state) and remain tax free if distributions are used to pay for qualified higher education expenses. For more information about Florida 529 College Savings Plans visit www.myfloridaprepaid.com/what-we-offer/529-savings-plan. This plan contributes to a college savings account through a variety of different investment options.

Scholarships

Scholarships are offered by a wide range of organizations for countless reasons. Scholarship awards can be as little as $25.00 or cover all tuition and expenses for four years of college at one of the nation’s most expensive institutions. Finding scholarships and applying for them can seem overwhelming; therefore it is beneficial to talk to high school counselors and the financial aid office of the student’s college of interest. The Internet is also a free source of scholarship information.
The search can seem daunting. Help students by working with them to find a few scholarships for which they qualify and help them begin the application process. This will allow the students to become familiar with the process and remove any overwhelmed feelings. After you have encouraged the search for scholarships, remind students to not to give up the search, it will be worth it.

Below are a few of the many FREE websites available to help students find scholarships. While searching for scholarships, it’s important that students not fall for scams requesting fees.

- Visit the Florida Student Scholarship & Grant Programs at www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/ssfad/home/uamain.htm.
- Go to www.educationplanner.org, and click on “Find grants or scholarships” under the “Start Thinking about Life After High School” box.
- Visit www.scholarships.com and click on the “Scholarship Search” tab.

Here are some suggested Internet search categories for potential scholarships:

- Scholastic Achievement (grades, honor society membership, etc.)
- Race
- Gender
- LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning)
- Economic Need
- Religious Affiliation
- Organizations parents/guardians may be affiliated with (sororities, fraternities, Kiwanis, Rotary Club, etc.)
- The state in which students live
- The high school students attended
- Sports students participated in
- Community service students participated in
- The college a student wants to attend
- The field/major a student intends to pursue
- Disabilities or handicaps students may have
- Special talents students may have, like art or music
- Whether students’ parents have served in any branch of the military

Students should begin searching for scholarships during the fall of their junior year, even if they cannot apply for the scholarships until they are seniors. Students should keep a file of scholarship application requirements and their forms as well as a calendar of deadlines. Doing this will give students plenty of time to hone their application information and any necessary application essays.

Grants

Grants, like scholarships, are free money to help pay for a college education. They are usually issued by colleges, non-profit organizations, or government agencies and given to individuals based on financial need, whether they meet certain criteria or are in response to a commitment to complete a particular project or study a particular field. Project-based
Grants require the submission of a proposal and evidence that the project was completed. Most of the time, grants are tax free and do not have to be repaid, unless in special circumstances when an individual does not keep a commitment.

Below are examples of the types of grants available to help students pay for college:

- Florida tuition waiver programs for students who have been in foster care or adopted: [www.myflfamilies.com/reach](http://www.myflfamilies.com/reach), [www.nacac.org/adoptionsubsidy/factsheets/tuition.html](http://www.nacac.org/adoptionsubsidy/factsheets/tuition.html), and [www.adoptflorida.org/contactPACounselor.shtml](http://www.adoptflorida.org/contactPACounselor.shtml).

- Federal Grants, such as the Pell Grant, a need-based grant for low-income students, the Academic Competitiveness Grant, etc. All federal grants require the completion of the federal financial aid form (FAFSA); [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).

- The federal Teach Grant program for undergraduate and graduate students who plan to pursue a teaching career and who agree to teach in a low-income area and/or a high-need field for a specified period of time following graduation; [www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov), click on “Types of Aid” and scroll down to “Grants and Scholarships.”

- Students should also search for grants available for particular ethnic groups, such as African Americans, Latin Americans, Asian Americans, Irish Americans, Jewish Americans, Italian Americans, Arab Americans, and Native Americans; for women; for individuals from particular religious groups; for first-generation college students; for high-needs fields; for specific fields, such as engineering, math, and science; and for students whose family members have been in the military.

**College Work Study Programs**

College work study programs are paying jobs offered to certain students based on their financial needs as part of federal, state or college-based financial aid packages. Students usually work on campus or locally for at least the current minimum wage. The amount of aid available is based on pay rate and number of hours worked.

If you currently have work study or have had it in the past, you should share your experience with the student so they can make a more personal connection to work study. You can give them the details of what types of jobs were available to you and other students, what positions you held, what positions your friends held, and how work study jobs usually are good at accommodating your school responsibilities.

**Working and Paying as You Go**

One way students can pay for their college education is to attend part-time and pay as they go. In other words, students take a limited number of classes per term (typically one or two), possibly live at home to keep expenses minimal, and pay the tuition for their college classes out of their earnings.

This method may not work for everyone because it takes much longer to get a 2- or 4-year degree by going to school part-time. However, the benefits of getting a degree outweigh the additional time it might take to get one. For example, it’s still better to take six years or more to get a 4-year degree than not to get one at all. Additionally, students will not have or have significantly reduced postsecondary debt.

If students are considering the option of paying for their own college education, they may want to begin at a 2-year community college and then transfer to a 4-year college. To make sure that a community college is the cheaper alternative, students should check the costs of all schools they are interested in attending. Sometimes a 4-year college can cost the same as a 2-year college. Additionally, if a student decides to go the community college route first, he/she should check the transferability of their courses to the 4-year school they plan to attend. Contact the registration office at the community college and the 4-year school to ensure credit transferability. Some community colleges have transfer partnerships with local 4-year colleges, making the transition between schools easier for students.
Loans: Private and Bank

Students and their parents should exhaust all of their federal and/or state loan options before seeking private loans. Loans from private lenders, such as banks, credit unions, and other financial institutions, may be the easiest but least cost-effective way to finance a college education. These loans are offered to students and/or their families based on their credit ratings and current interest rates. Some loans made directly to students may be deferred. If a student does not have a credit history, he/she may need a cosigner to get the loan. Take the time to explain what a cosigner is if they are not sure what the term means.

The benefit of applying for such loans is that no FAFSA is required, and students can borrow up to 100% of the cost of college (assuming they qualify for the loan) less any other aid they have received from other sources. However, these types of loans are usually less beneficial than federal or state loans/programs because they are based on an individual’s credit rating and are less flexible, i.e., they usually do not have the range of repayment options that are available under federal or state loans, such as income-based repayment plans, additional deferment if a student returns to school, and loan forgiveness. Encourage students to visit the “Federal Aid First” website for a discussion of the benefits of federal loans versus private loans; the address is [www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov) then type in “differences between deferral and private loans.”

What type of Loan is best for me, Federal or Private?

- Next Student: [www.nextstudent.com](http://www.nextstudent.com)
- The Project on Student Debt: [www.projectonstudentdebt.org](http://www.projectonstudentdebt.org)

Loans: State and Federal

If students have applied for other sources of funds, such as scholarships, grants, and state and federal financial aid, and still have a needs gap to pay for college, they should apply for low-interest state and federal loans.

Following are some important things to know about these loans:

- Some loans are offered directly to students; others are available to students’ parents/guardians.
- All loans must be repaid, but those offered directly to students can have deferred payment options. Deferment means that the repayment does not begin until after students have graduated from college, usually six months after graduation. Such loans also include a range of repayment options, such as income-based payment plans, additional deferment options for when students return to school, and loan forgiveness. If a student chooses to leave college prior to graduation, loans still must be repaid.
- Payments on loans made to students’ parents/guardians usually begin shortly after all funds have been distributed. These loans, although offered at reduced rates, are not deferred.
- Subsidized federal loans are loans where the government pays the interest on the loan and are based on financial need. Unsubsidized loans are loans where the student is responsible for the interest accrued on the loan and are not need-based.
- Most federal loans are available to students and their parents regardless of income level or credit history.

It is imperative that students and their guardians read all of the loan stipulations and repayment options when applying for this type of funding. Students can find out about state and federal loan programs by visiting the Florida Office of Student Financial Assistance website: [www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/FFELP/ffelp_homepage.html](http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/FFELP/ffelp_homepage.html). To find out
information about federal loans only, students should visit the FAFSA website, www.fafsa.ed.gov. When in doubt, the financial aid officers at each institution can be a wonderful resource to answer questions.

Before making a decision about applying for a loan, students and their parents/guardians may want to read information from the Project on Student Debt, a non–profit organization working to increase public understanding of loans as means to pay for college. The Project’s goal is to identify cost–effective solutions that expand educational opportunities, protect family financial security, and advance economic competitiveness. For more information about the Project visit: www.projectonstudentdebt.org.

**Federal and State Financial Aid**

Applying for state and federal financial aid is the first thing students should do when there is a gap between how much college costs and how much their families are able to contribute toward those costs.

**Florida Financial Aid**

To find information about state financial aid programs and how to apply for those programs, students should visit their high school guidance counselors or visit the websites below.

- Florida Prepaid College Plans: www.myfloridaprepaid.com/what-we-offer. This plan allows parents, grandparents, businesses and others to pre-purchase undergraduate tuition for a child residing in Florida for any college or state university at current plan prices.
- Florida 529 College Savings Plans: www.myfloridaprepaid.com/what-we-offer/529-savings-plan. This plan contributes to a college savings account through a variety of different investment options.
- Florida Student Scholarship & Grant Programs: www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/SSFAD/home/uamain.htm. The Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) State Programs, within the Florida Department of Education, administers a variety of postsecondary educational state-funded grants and scholarships, and provides information to students, parents, and high school and postsecondary professionals. Review the section on Florida's Bright Futures scholarship program.
- Florida Department of Education: www.fldoe.org. Financial aid and scholarships like the Bright Futures Scholarship Program and Corporate Tax Credit Scholarships are available for students to apply for.
- Florida tuition waiver programs: www.myflfamilies.com/reach, www.nacac.org/adoption/subsidy/factsheets/tuition.html, and www.adoptflorida.org/contactPACounselor.shtml. Students who have been in foster care or adopted may be eligible for Florida's tuition waiver programs.

**Federal Financial Aid**

Getting federal financial aid begins with completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Types of federal aid include grants, work–study programs, and low–interest loans.
The FAFSA
Free Application for Federal Student Aid

This section of the toolkit is designed to provide College Positive Volunteers (CPVs) with a basic understanding of the FAFSA and the application process.

All federal financial aid is tied to the correct and timely completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, the FAFSA. Information from the FAFSA is used to determine whether students are eligible for grants, work study programs, and low interest loans.

Federal aid is available for students planning to attend 4-year colleges, 2-year colleges, and other career-focused schools. It's critical that students not assume they will be ineligible for aid based on where they want to go to college or their financial resources; there is no harm in applying.

Several good sources of information about the FAFSA and federal financial aid are:

- High school guidance counselors
- College financial aid offices
- Florida College Goal Sunday, a free on-site program that helps students and families complete financial aid forms; for more information and to find a location, visit www.navigatingyourfinancialfuture.org/CGS/FLORIDA/Home.aspx.

The Federal Student Aid Website

The website (www.fafsa.ed.gov) is an excellent resource for information about federal student aid. Via the website, students can:

- Find information on federal student aid.
- Use "MyFSA" (a free, personalized student portfolio) to create a folder to record interests, careers, and the college search process, to help them decide on a career and locate schools offering majors in that field. Students can track their progress in the college planning and application process by applying to schools online, accessing other sources of non-federal aid, and storing their personal information to populate fields for FAFSA on the Web.
- Apply online using FAFSA on the Web, the online version of the FAFSA.
- Obtain a Federal Student Aid PIN to sign their FAFSA on the Web.
- Use FAFSA4caster (found on the home page of www.fafsa.ed.gov) to get an early estimate of their eligibility for federal student aid and to get an early start in the financial aid process. When they're ready to apply for aid, much of the information they enter in FAFSA4caster will populate FAFSA on the Web.
- Look up the status of their federal student loan.

Completing FAFSA on the Web

If possible, students and their families should complete the FAFSA online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. If the student does not have parent/guardian/family member that can help them, then encourage and help students find resources within their school in order to have someone help them complete the FAFSA. Students who do not have access to tax information may apply for an exemption. Students should contact a financial aid representative from the school they wish to attend. Advantages to completing the FAFSA online, according to the government publication, Funding Education Beyond High School: The Guide to Federal Student Aid, 2012 - 2013, include:

- A downloadable and printable FAFSA on the Web Worksheet.
- The online application, FAFSA on the Web, looks at the answers provided to previous questions and uses skip-logic to only display questions that apply to each person’s individual situation. This makes the application process shorter.
- FAFSA on the Web identifies potential errors right away and prompts on-the-spot corrections.
- There are online instructions for each question and live help is available for additional questions.
- Based on the information provided, screens appear to determine eligibility for various grants.
- Application information can be sent to up to ten schools; the paper form is limited to four.
- Once the application is submitted, the information is immediately sent to the U.S. Department of Education and will be sent a confirmation notice.
- The online application will be processed quickly, if students or their parents provide electronic signatures using the PIN. The PIN is an electronic access code that serves as a personal identifier. Students and their parents can apply for a PIN at www.pin.ed.gov.

Completing the Paper-Based FAFSA

Students and their families do not have to complete the FAFSA online. Paper-based copies of the form can be obtained by calling the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243) or by downloading a PDF version of the form from www.studentaid.ed.gov. The paper-based version of the form includes the same information as the online version. Students can open the PDF file, complete it on their computers, and print it out; or they can print out the form and complete it by hand. Completed forms should be mailed to the address provided on the form.

When to Complete the FAFSA

It depends. Students planning to attend college immediately after they graduate from high school should complete the FAFSA during their senior years once tax forms have been received (IRS 1040). Because the FAFSA can also be used as a basis for aid for the planned college of attendance and for state aid, students have to be aware of all possible submission deadlines.

Applications can be submitted as early as January 1, and no later than June 30. Colleges must have the students’ complete and correct FAFSA information by the last day of their enrollment of the school year. Other dates may apply based on how students submitted their FAFSAs, electronically or by mail.
The FAFSA Deadlines for Some Florida Colleges and Universities:
Students must check with college financial aid offices or their websites to find out when to submit their FAFSAs.

Below are a few examples from Florida colleges and universities:

- Florida Southern College: early decision deadline is December 1st and regular decision is March 1st.
- Florida Gulf Coast University: spring deadline is November 15th, summer deadline is February 15th and fall deadline is May 1st.
- Ringling College of Art & Design: deadline for computer animation major is January 15th and all other major deadlines are on a rolling basis.

The range of dates included above indicates that students must be diligent about contacting the financial aid offices of the colleges they plan to attend so they will not miss any important submission deadlines. Help students obtain the details regarding dates from the schools they are interested in or help gather the contact information and have the student call to gather the information.

What is needed to complete the FAFSA?

For students and/or their parents/guardians to complete the FAFSA, they will need to have several records/documents on hand to fill out application questions. This information is used to determine families or individuals financial contributions to students’ postsecondary education, referred to as the Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The EFC is a calculation based on income and assets and a pre–determined formula.

To complete the FAFSA, students and parents should have the following on hand:

- Social Security card
- Driver’s license (if any)
- Permanent Resident Receipt Card (if applicable)
- Alien Registration Card (if applicable)
- W–2 forms and other records of money earned
- Income tax return (see the instructions on the FAFSA if the tax return has not been completed)
- IRS 1040, 1040A, or 1040 EZ
- Your Parent’s Federal Income Tax Return (if you are a dependent student)
- Your untaxed income records
- Records of child support paid
- Records of taxable earnings from Federal Work–Study or other need–based work programs
- Records of the student’s grant, scholarship and fellowship aid, including AmeriCorps awards, that were included in the student’s (or the parents’) adjusted gross income
- Current stock, bond, and other investment records
- Current business and farm records
- Current bank statements

19. Dates obtained from college websites.
Help for Completing the FAFSA

Students and their family members may need to seek help completing the FAFSA. It’s critical that the form be completely correctly so students will be able to get all available aid.

Because of the critical nature of the document and the personal data that must be provided, it is not likely that students and their parents/guardians will ask for your help to complete the FAFSA (and for these reasons, you should not help to complete a student’s FAFSA). However, they will need to know where to go to get professional help. Remember to remind them to be cautious of fraudulent websites. The individuals and resources to help them successfully complete the form are some of the same ones they can go to for information about financial aid in general:

- College financial aid offices
- Information available on the Federal Student Aid website: www.studentaid.ed.gov
- The Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243)
- Florida College Goal Sunday, a free on-site program that helps students and families complete financial aid forms: www.navigatingyourfinancialfuture.org/CGS!FLORIDA/Home.aspx
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
FOR ALL AGES

Campus Visit Checklist

A campus visit will allow you to see the college and learn specific information that will help you make an informed decision about the school. This activity can be found on and printed from the CPV website for K–12 students.

Before Your Visit

Research the college to find out:

☐ If they offer the major you want to pursue.

☐ Where the school is located, i.e., in the city, the country, or the suburbs.

☐ The size of the school.

☐ The school’s reputation; a number of reports are available online that rank colleges and universities based on a number of areas, i.e., cost, size, type, etc.

☐ Extracurricular sports and activities offered.

☐ If there is a mentoring program with staff, adjunct faculty, administrators, or faculty to help undergraduate students succeed in college and their careers.

☐ What kind of minority student and/or LGBTQ offices and support the school offers.

☐ What type of student services are offered to help students succeed in college (e.g. tutoring, writing centers, computer labs, etc.).

☐ The background of its faculty in your field of interest.

☐ Schedule an appointment with someone from admissions and/or financial aid and a representative from the department that offers the major you are thinking of pursuing.

During Your Visit

For Financial Aid/Admissions ask:

☐ Would you be accepted to the school based on your grades and activities?

☐ Are there any specific programs that offer intensive academic and supportive student services for underrepresented/underprepared students (College Assistance Migrant Program, Supportive Services, etc.)?

☐ When should you apply? When and how will acceptance notifications be distributed?

☐ Are there any scholarship programs you can apply for or are qualified for? If so, how can you apply?

☐ What type of financial aid is available for students? When and how can you apply for that aid? When will notices of aid be distributed?
Is there a designated financial aid advisor for each student or do you call, email, or set up an appointment randomly through the financial aid office?

For the department offering your major ask:

- How large are class sizes (for general curriculum classes and in specific majors)?
- What is the student/teacher ratio?
- What is the graduation rate of students in the department?
- What types of jobs do students get after graduation? How many students get jobs after graduation?
- What are the types of courses you would have to take? Which ones do students find most difficult?
- Does the department offer tutoring for its students?
- Who should you go to if you need support for making class selections? May I choose my academic advisor within the department?
- Does the department offer scholarships specific to its students?
- Are there any opportunities to work as a teacher’s assistant or research assistant with faculty of the department?
- Are there internships or work study programs you can participate in while in college that will help you gain experience in your field?

While you are touring the campus:

- Visit a dormitory.
- Visit and dine in the cafeteria. Ask the admissions office if they supply visiting students with a ticket(s) or voucher to experience cafeteria dining on campus.
- Visit the student center.
- Visit the tutoring/academic success center.
- Visit the library.
- Visit the study abroad office to familiarize yourself with opportunities to study in different parts of the world or study away programs exploring different parts of the U.S.
- Visit the volunteer center, which is where students go to sign up for volunteer activities. Getting involved will help you feel like a part of your college and local community. Additionally, staying connected helps encourage students to complete their college degrees.
- Sit in on a class if possible; if not, visit classroom buildings.
- Drive through the area surrounding the campus.
- Talk to current students about what they do or do not like about the campus.
- Get a copy of the student newspaper and other college brochures to refer to later.
- Find out about on-campus recreational activities and student clubs.
- Spend as much time as possible on the campus and ask LOTS of questions.
1. Find and list the names of five colleges in Florida and where they are located.

2. What are the names of the University of Florida's mascots and their school colors?

3. What is the name of the oldest college in Florida and what year was it founded?
   Where is it located?

4. How many campuses does Florida State College at Jacksonville have and where are they located?

5. How many students attended the University of South Florida for the 2013-2014 school year?

6. Which school is located on the highest hill in Tallahassee?
   What does the acronym HBCU stand for?

7. Everglades University is accredited by the Commission on ______________ to award bachelor's and master's degrees?

8. List Bethune-Cookman University's women's and men's sports.

9. What is the 2013-2014 yearly tuition and average class size at Flagler College?
10. Name the different races/ethnicities and percentages of the students that attend Valencia College in Orlando.

11. University of Miami’s admission requirements for freshman include?

12. The Billy Harrison Field House is the name of the Wellness Complex at what school in Panama City?

13. What is Miami Dade College’s 3 letter acronym?

14. Lynn University in Boca Raton offers 3 dining facilities, what are their names and where are they located?

15. Florida Institute of Technology in Melbourne offers several housing options for their students with different bedroom, restroom, shower and living room set ups. Name all the dorms and apartment-like buildings.

16. Indian River State College is ranked as the most affordable college in the country by the U.S. Department of Education.

17. Define what it means to be a private college or university?
18. List one possible college major: __________________________________________

19. List the names of two colleges in Florida that offer degrees in that major.
   1st college: __________________________________________________________
   2nd college: ________________________________________________________

20. Find a college in Florida where you can train to be a paramedic.
    What is the name of the college? ______________________________________
    Where is it located? __________________________________________________
Online Scavenger Hunt: Colleges and Universities in Florida (Answers)

1. Answers will vary
2. Alberta & Albert, orange and blue
3. Rollins College in 1885, Winter Park, FL
4. 5 total campuses, 4 physical: North, Kent, South & Downtown and the 5th is Open Campus, pioneered non-traditional educational delivery—and non-traditional students—beginning in 1988 through telecourses and weekend courses. Access to education became unparalleled.
5. 47,943
6. Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University, Historically Black Colleges & Universities
7. Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
8. Women's: basketball, bowling, cross country, golf, softball, tennis, track and field, volleyball
   Men's: baseball, basketball, cross country, football, golf, tennis, track and field
9. $16,180 & 20 students
10. Caucasian 34.8%
     Hispanic 31.2%
     African-American 17.2%
     Asian/Pacific Islander 4.8%
     Native American .3%
     Other (non-resident) 11.7%
11. Strength of high school curriculum & grades
    Standardized test scores
    Letters of recommendation
    Essay
    Extracurricular activities
    Awards/achievements
12. Gulf Coast State College
13. 3 letter acronym – MDC
14. Elmore Dining Commons, Student Center
    Christine's Coffee House, Student Center
    Perpe Coffee House, Eugene M. & Christine E.
    Lynn Library
15. Roberts
    Grissom
    Wood
    Shaw
    Campbell
    Evans
    Brownlie
    Southgate
    Harris Village
    Mary Star of the Sea
    Columbia Village
16. 4th
17. Possible answer: The term “private” simply means that the university's funding comes from tuition, investments and private donors, not from taxpayers.
18. Answers will vary
19. Answers will vary
20. Answers will vary
POSSIBLE CAREER PATHS

A Self Inventory for K–12 Students

The purpose of this self-inventory is to encourage students to think about and assess themselves in ways that will help them choose, or not choose, certain careers.

Your favorite subjects

<p>| LIST YOUR FAVORITE SUBJECTS IN SCHOOL | WHY DO YOU LIKE THE SUBJECT? |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IN ORDER FROM FAVORITE TO LEAST FAVORITE</th>
<th>BE AS SPECIFIC AS POSSIBLE</th>
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</table>

Subjects you dislike

<p>| LIST SUBJECTS YOU DO NOT LIKE IN SCHOOL | WHY DO YOU DISLIKE THE SUBJECT? |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FROM THOSE HATED TO THOSE YOU JUST DISLIKE</th>
<th>BE AS SPECIFIC AS POSSIBLE</th>
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Your hobbies or things you like to do when you are not in school

<p>| LIST YOUR HOBBIES IN THIS COLUMN | WHY DO YOU LIKE IT? |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STARTING WITH YOUR FAVORITE THING TO DO</th>
<th>BE AS SPECIFIC AS POSSIBLE</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
Make a list that completes the following statement: “I’m really good at…”


Make a list that completes the following statement: “I’m not so good at…”


How do you prefer to work? (Check one)

☐ ALONE
☐ IN A GROUP

Why? (Be as specific as possible): ____________________________


Would you prefer to work in a big organization or a small one? (Check one)

☐ BIG COMPANY
☐ SMALL ONE

Why? (Be as specific as possible): ____________________________


Do you prefer to be the leader or the follower when you are with your friends or when you work in groups? (Check one)

☐ THE LEADER
☐ THE FOLLOWER


Additional Resources

Possible career paths:
a self inventory for K–12 students
Why? (Be as specific as possible): ____________________________________________________________

Would you prefer a job where you would make a lot of money or one where you would be happy? (Check one)

☐ MAKE MONEY
☐ BE HAPPY

Why? (Be as specific as possible): ____________________________________________________________

Do you like being the person who helps out behind the scenes or do you prefer being the person who is out front getting the attention? (Check one)

☐ BEHIND THE SCENES
☐ OUT FRONT GETTING ATTENTION

Why? (Be as specific as possible): ____________________________________________________________

Would you rather create something artistic with your hands or work to get the answer to a complex math problem? (Check one)

☐ CREATE SOMETHING ARTISTIC
☐ SOLVE A COMPLEX MATH PROBLEM

Why? (Be as specific as possible): ____________________________________________________________
Would you rather read a good book or meet a new person? (Check one)

☐ A GOOD BOOK
☐ MEET A NEW PERSON

Why? (Be as specific as possible):
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Would you prefer to work with people, numbers, or things? (Check one)

☐ PEOPLE
☐ NUMBERS
☐ THINGS

Why? (Be as specific as possible):
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Do you find it more enjoyable to complete a project you did by yourself or help someone? (Check one)

☐ COMPLETE A PROJECT YOU DID BY YOURSELF
☐ HELP SOMEONE

Why? (Be as specific as possible):
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Are you better at writing or math? (Check one)

☐ WRITING
☐ MATH

Why? (Be as specific as possible):
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
What do you do when there are conflicts or disagreements? (Check one)

☐ STEP IN THE MIDDLE AND PROPOSE A SOLUTION
☐ SHY AWAY AND HOPE THINGS WILL TURN OUT

Why? (Be as specific as possible):
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

How you respond to pressure when you have a big project due? (Check one)

☐ I’M EXCITED BECAUSE I LIKE THE CHALLENGE AND PRESSURE
☐ I FEEL LOTS OF ANXIETY BECAUSE I DO NOT LIKE THE PRESSURE
☐ I DO NOT DO THE PROJECT BECAUSE I DO NOT LIKE FEELING PRESSURED

Why? (Be as specific as possible):
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

How do you feel about school and studying? (Respond to each one. Be as specific as possible.)

Finish this statement: “I think school is…”
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

Personalize and complete this statement: “I do/or do not enjoy studying because…”
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
Name two individuals who you think have great jobs or who you think of as your heroes. Why? (Explain)

Person #1: ________________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

Person #2: ________________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

What do others say about your future career path? (Complete the statements. Be as specific as possible.)

“My friends and/or family say I should be a… I agree because…” ________________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

“My friends and/or family say I should be a… I disagree because…” ________________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

“My teachers say I should be... I agree because...” ________________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________
“My teachers say I should be... I disagree because...”

Think about what you want to be and why. Be realistic about choosing a career. Use your self-assessment to choose a career based on who you are and what you do or do not like! You may need to do a little research about possible career paths and the traits of individuals in specific jobs before you can complete the following statement.

Go to secure.flchoices.org and click on the “Career Planning” tab and then “Explore Careers” to browse through an alphabetical list of careers. This website includes the education level needed, state average annual earnings, state employment outlook and career cluster for each chosen career. Go to www.fldoe.org/workforce/publicat.asp and explore your interest step-by-step using the Career Cruiser.

I am interested in being a ____________________________ (career choice) because (the traits, preferences, and interests you have that will help you succeed in this area) ________________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Possible career paths: a self inventory for K–12 students
OVERVIEW OF INTERNET RESOURCES

This section contains helpful websites and online publications which may or may not have been referenced in other sections of this toolkit. Be mindful that Internet links change and sometimes disappear. The toolkit website is www.floridacompact.org.

Use common sense and safe Internet practices when accessing any sites. Always use extra caution whenever personal information is requested. Additionally, as stated in the Introduction, all of the sites included in this toolkit were checked and working when the toolkit was published. Those included have been found useful, but their inclusion here does not necessarily represent endorsement of particular agencies or their practices.

NOTE: Many college-focused websites provide information about multiple topics, i.e., preparing for college, applying for college, finding a career, etc. Thus, some websites in the following list appear under multiple categories and could possibly fit under even more. The categories provided are just guides for thinking about the list of sites.

Career Colleges and Technical Schools

- Education Planner: www.educationplanner.com. Click on “Explore careers that interest you.”

Career/Personality Tests for Students

For Elementary and Middle School Students

- FunEducation: www.funeducation.com
  A number of kid-friendly tests (career, personality, IQ) but some of them can be lengthy even though they are multiple choice; students should visit this site with their parents'/guardians’ permissions because address information is requested.

For High School Students

- University of Missouri, Career Interests: www.career.missouri.edu

Choosing the Right College

- Sallie Mae, College Answer: www.collegeanswer.com, Click “Selecting.”
- Student Aid on the Web: www.studentaid2.ed.gov/gotocollege/collegefinder. Click on “Prepare for College” and scroll down to “Choosing a School.”
- Peterson’s College Bound: www.petersons.com
- Virtual College Tours: www.campustours.com
- Cappex Your College Decision Headquarters: www.cappex.com
Choosing to Go To College
■ Pathways to College: www.pathwaystocollege.org

Community College Resources
■ The Florida College System: www.fldoe.org/fis

Financial Aid: Federal
■ Federal Student Aid: www.studentaid.ed.gov
■ The FAFSA: www.fafsa.ed.gov
■ The Federal Student Aid PIN website: www.pin.ed.gov

Financial Aid: State
■ Florida Prepaid College Plans: www.myfloridaprepaid.com/what-we-offer. This plan allows parents, grandparents, businesses and others to pre-purchase undergraduate tuition for a child residing in Florida for any college or state university at current plan prices.
■ Florida 529 College Savings Plans: www.myfloridaprepaid.com/what-we-offer/529-savings-plan. This plan contributes to a college savings account through a variety of different investment options.
■ Florida Student Scholarship & Grant Programs: www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/SSFAD/home/uamain.htm. The Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) State Programs, within the Florida Department of Education, administers a variety of postsecondary educational state-funded grants and scholarships, and provides information to students, parents, and high school and postsecondary professionals.
■ Florida Department of Education: www.fl doe.org. Financial aid and scholarships like the Bright Futures Scholarship Program and Corporate Tax Credit Scholarships are available for students to apply for.
■ Florida tuition waiver programs: www.myflfamilies.com/reach, www.nacac.org/adoptionsubsidy/factsheets/tuition.html, and www.adoptflorida.org/contactPACounselor.shtml. Students who have been in foster care or adopted may be eligible for Florida’s tuition waiver programs.

Help for Completing the FAFSA
■ Florida College Goal Sunday: www.navigatingyourfinancialfuture.org/CGS/FLORIDA/Home.aspx
■ Visit your guidance counselor or Career Center and ask for assistance.

Help for Considering Types of Loans, Federal or Private
■ Federal Aid First: www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov/federalaidfirst/index.html
■ Next Student: www.nextstudent.com
■ The Project on Student Debt: www.projectonstudentdebt.org

Information for Students About Safely Using the Internet
■ Get Net Wise: www.getnetwise.com
■ Safe Teens.com: www.safeteens.com
Organizations Supporting this Project and College Access

- Florida Campus Compact: www.floridacompact.org
- Campus Compact: www.compact.org
- Florida College Access Network: www.floridacollegeaccess.org
- The National College Access Network: www.collegeaccess.org

Paying for College

- Know How 2 Go: www.knowhow2go.org
- Mapping Your Future: www.mappingyourfuture.org
- Pacer Center: Champions for Students with Disabilities. Visit: www.pacer.org and type “college planning” in the search box for a list of resources.

Preparing for College

- College.gov: www.college.gov
- Education Planner.org: www.educationplanner.org
- Go College: www.gocollege.com
- Know How 2 Go: www.knowhow2go.org
- Mapping Your Future: www.mappingyourfuture.org
- Sallie Mae, College Answer: www.collegeanswer.com
- The College Board: www.collegeboard.com. Click on the “Student” link.
- Quest Bridge: www.questbridge.org/index.php
- National Association for College Admission Counseling: www.nacacnet.org/Pages/default.aspx

Preparing for the ACT/SAT

- 4 Tests: www.4tests.com
- March 2 Success: www.march2success.com
- Number2.com: www.number2.com
- The ACT: www.ACTStudent.org
- The College Board, Preparing for the SAT: www.collegeboard.com/testing

Resources for Students with Disabilities

- Pacer Center: Champions for Students with Disabilities: www.pacer.org. Type “College Planning” into the search box for a list of resources.

Scholarship Search

- Education Planner: www.educationplanner.com, click on “Students” and scroll down to “Paying for School.”
- Fast Web: www.fastweb.com
- The Federal Student Aid, Scholarship Search Tool: https://studentaid.ed.gov, and click on “Scholarships and Grants” under the “Types of Aid” tab.
- Mission Possible: www.thesalliemaefund.org, click on “Financial Aid Resources.”
Student Scholarship Search: www.studentScholarshipsearch.com
College Board: https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college/grants-scholarships
College Express: www.collegeexpress.com/scholarships/search
Cappex Your College Decision Headquarters: www.cappex.com
Visit your career center and ask about local scholarship opportunities.

Selecting a Career
Know How 2 Go: www.knowhow2go.org
Florida Choices: secure.flchoices.org
Career Cruiser: www.fldoe.org/workforce/publicat.asp
My Majors: www.mymajors.com

The College Positive Volunteers Toolkit Website
A PDF version of this College Positive Volunteers Toolkit is available for download at www.floridacompact.org.

This toolkit is also available at www.thecompactaccess2success.com. This companion site includes activities, online publications, and links to other websites that can be used when working with K-12 youth.

Resources authored by Michigan Campus Compact and maintained by National Campus Compact.
GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACT: The college admission test introduced in the 1950s by American College Testing Program as an alternative to the SAT. It is used by four–year colleges, along with other information about students, to help them determine admissions. Students should check with the colleges they are interested in attending to find out whether the ACT and/or SAT is accepted as part of the admission process. To obtain more detailed information about the ACT, go to www.ACTStudent.org.

COLLEGES: For the purposes of this toolkit, all of the following postsecondary institutions: four–year colleges and universities; two–year community and junior colleges; and vocational, technical, and business schools.

COLLEGE ACCESS: Efforts of non–profit groups to increase the college enrollment of all students by providing support and information about college preparation, paying for college, career selection, financial resources, etc. Some college access initiatives focus on student groups that are underrepresented in postsecondary education, such as students from certain ethnic groups, students who are the first persons in their families to attend college, and low–income students.

COLLEGE GOAL SUNDAY: A free on-site program that helps students and families complete financial aid forms; to find out more information and location, visit www.navigatingyourfinancialfuture.org/CGS!/FLORIDA/Home.aspx.

COLLEGE POSITIVE MINDSET: The belief that college is attainable for all students and that you are willing to do whatever you can to help those students prepare for and enroll in college.

COLLEGE POSITIVE MOTTO: College Positive Volunteers do not ask a student: “Are you going to college?” Instead, they ask: “Where are you going to college, and how can I help you get there?”

COLLEGE POSITIVE VOLUNTEER: Individuals who work with or are planning to work with K–12 students with the goal of helping the younger students think about and pursue postsecondary education.

CPV: The acronym for College Positive Volunteers.

COSIGNER: Someone whose credit rating and history is better or more established than the person applying for a loan. The co-signer signs the loan application with the borrower as a guarantor that the loan will be repaid. If the borrower defaults on the loan, the cosigner is responsible for repaying it.

CULTURAL SENSITIVITY: Recognizing the difference between cultures and viewing those differences objectively, valuing them, and incorporating them into interactions with individuals from those cultures.

DEFERMENT: A postponement of a payment on a loan during which interest does not accrue if the loan is subsidized.

EVENT-BASED VOLUNTEER: Individuals who will only have a limited time interaction with K–12 students, like for a one–day event, a week–long camp, etc.

EXTENDED–TERM VOLUNTEER: Individuals working with K–12 students on a longer term commitment, like six months, a year, or longer.

FAFSA: The Free Application for Federal Student Aid that must be submitted to determine eligibility for federal aid in the form of grants, work study programs, and low interest loans. It may also be used to determine aid provided by colleges and states. For more information about the FAFSA, visit www.fafsa.ed.gov.
FINANCIAL AID: Financial support given to students by federal and state organizations or postsecondary institutions to help students pay for college.

FIRST GENERATION STUDENTS: Those individuals who are the first in their families to enroll in college; their parents have no more than high school educations.

FLORIDA CAMPUS COMPACT (FL|CC): Florida Campus Compact is part of a national presidential membership organization. FL|CC is comprised of over 50 college and university presidents who are committed to helping students develop the values and skills of active citizenship through participation in public and community service. FL|CC works with these presidents and their campuses to integrate service with academic study and to provide a collegial experience for intercampus and community collaborations. To learn more about our commitment and to join us in this mission visit [www.floridacompact.org](http://www.floridacompact.org).

FLORIDA COLLEGE ACCESS NETWORK (FCAN): FCAN’s mission is to create and strengthen a statewide network that catalyzes and supports communities to improve college and career preparation, access, and completion for all students. To find out more visit [www.floridacollegeaccess.org](http://www.floridacollegeaccess.org).

FLORIDA 529 COLLEGE SAVINGS PLANS: A savings plan that contributes to a college savings account through a variety of different investment options. For more information visit [www.myfloridaprepaid.com/what-we-offer/529-savings-plan](http://www.myfloridaprepaid.com/what-we-offer/529-savings-plan).

FLORIDA PRE-PAID: A pre-paid tuition plan that allows parents, grandparents, businesses and others to pre-purchase undergraduate tuition for a child residing in Florida for any college or state university at current plan prices. For more information visit [www.myfloridaprepaid.com/what-we-offer](http://www.myfloridaprepaid.com/what-we-offer).

GRANTS: Similar to scholarships as free money to help pay for education. They are usually issued by colleges, nonprofit organizations, or governmental agencies and given to individuals based on financial need, whether they meet certain criteria, or in response to a commitment to complete a particular project or study a particular field. Sometimes grants have to be repaid if recipients do not fulfill their obligations.

K-12: Kindergarten through 12th grade.

LOAN DEFERMENT: When payments of a loan are suspended for the borrower until a later point in time. For example, some federal loans are paid to students while they are in college, but they do not have to begin repaying their loans, or their loans are deferred, until they are no longer in college.

MICHIGAN CAMPUS COMPACT (MiCC): Michigan Campus Compact is a coalition of college and university presidents who are committed to fulfilling the public purposes of higher education. MiCC promotes the education and commitment of Michigan college students to be civically engaged citizens, through creating and expanding academic, co-curricular and campus-wide opportunities for community service, service-learning and civic engagement. MiCC is affiliated with Campus Compact and the Michigan Nonprofit Association.

MYFSA: A free, personalized student portfolio available on Student Aid on the Web ([studentaid.ed.gov/redirects/federal-student-aid-ed.gov](http://studentaid.ed.gov/redirects/federal-student-aid-ed.gov)). Via MyFSA, students can search for colleges and scholarships, research careers, apply to colleges and store and access financial aid information that can be exported to the FAFSA.

NATIONAL COLLEGE ACCESS NETWORK (NCAN): A non-profit organization that grew out of the networking of individuals and organizations focused on college access. It provides a variety of services to its members—state and local access programs—such as advice, financial support, resource information, etc. The web address for the NCAN is [www.collegeaccess.org](http://www.collegeaccess.org).
**NEED-BASED PROGRAMS/AID:** Initiatives that focus on individuals from low-income families. Funding programs and aid that are need-based take into account the gap between the cost of college and what the student and his/her family are able to contribute towards the student’s education.

**POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS/EDUCATION:** Any institution that offers programs or training for students beyond high school.

**PRIVATE/BANK LOANS:** Loans offered by banks, credit unions, and other financial institutions to students and/or their parents based on their credit ratings and current interest rates. Some loans made directly to students may be deferred. If a student does not have a credit history, he/she may need a cosigner to get the loan.

**PROFESSIONAL DEGREE:** A special degree that allows someone to be a medical doctor, dentist, pharmacist, etc.

**SAT:** The college admission test administered by the College Board. It is the oldest of the two college entrance examinations used by 4-year colleges, along with other information about students, to help them determine college admissions. There is the SAT I, the general test, and the SAT II, which consists of different subject-specific tests. Students should check with the colleges they are interested in attending to find out whether the ACT and/or SAT is accepted as part of the admission process and whether they need to take the SAT II along with the SAT I. The official site for the SAT is [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

**SHORT-TERM VOLUNTEER:** Individuals who work with K–12 students for more than a one-time or one-week event, like a 12–15 week semester or several months.

**UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS:** Students with certain characteristics who, for a number of reasons, are less represented than others in postsecondary education. These include students from certain ethnic groups (often Latinos, African Americans, and Native Americans), low-income students, and students who are the first individuals in their families to apply for and enter college.

**WORK STUDY PROGRAM:** A type of state or federal aid in which a student is given a job either on or off campus and paid a wage. The amount students earn is based on the wage and the number of hours worked.
Connect2Complete In Florida
A Peer Mentoring Resource For College Success

Mentoring Students
From Kindergarten to College

Community Engagement

Peer Advocacy & Support
With College Students & Adult Learners

Service-Learning

A Campus Compact Program with funding from The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Initial pilot program was launched in Florida at Broward College, Miami Dade College & Tallahassee Community College 2011-2014
CONTENTS: THE ADDENDUM
Connect2Complete Peer-to-Peer Mentoring for College Students & Adult Learners

C2C Overview

C2C Essentials & Program Design for the Post-Pilot Phase

Online Resources

What C2C Really Means

Connections that Complete the College Process

Florida C2C Profiles

Content for this Florida specific document was adapted from the C2C programming information created by the national Campus Compact organization with funding from The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.
Background:
As many colleges serve populations of underprepared and vulnerable students and simultaneously experience decreased budgets, they seek innovative ways to increase graduation rates while impacting the quality of student learning. Connect2Complete (C2C), developed by Campus Compact with funding from The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, is a new model for true student success.

What:
Campus Compact funded a total of nine colleges (three per state) in Florida, Ohio, and Washington, along with the Compact’s related state affiliates, to support an ambitious C2C pilot program between August 2011 and June 2014. Over the course of the pilot, these programs engaged more than 4,500 low-income, underprepared students enrolled in developmental education courses designed to get them ready for college-level coursework.
Through two distinct strategies, course-based peer-to-peer advocacy and peer-assisted service-learning, C2C supports vulnerable students in achieving academic success and credential completion while they actively engage with their peers, their college, and their broader community. These two strategies encourage academic development, social integration, personal development and civic consciousness – all key factors for student persistence.
Campus Compact, together with the pilot sites and our partner evaluators at Brandeis University, used data and evidence from the pilot projects to support identification of promising practices. Statewide learning communities coordinated by the Florida, Ohio, and Washington state affiliates and a national faculty fellows learning community, organized by Campus Compact, supported the development and dissemination of this knowledge.

How:
Each college tested unique peer-to-peer advocacy models that reflected the culture of their campus while incentivizing participation by Peer Advocates through one of the following mechanisms:

A. Federal work-study funds
B. Leadership courses for academic credit
C. AmeriCorps Education Awards, campus scholarships, student government funds

Peer Advocates worked alongside faculty in developmental education classes, individually, in cohorts, and through social media platforms to support students in setting goals, making connections to college life, achieving academic success, navigating college systems, and linking to college services designed to help students be successful. Students participated in service-learning activities in conjunction with developmental education courses, credit-bearing leadership development courses, and through projects coordinated by faculty, peer advocates and campus community engagement offices.

Who In Florida:
Florida Campus Compact
Broward College
Miami Dade College
Tallahassee Community College
Why:
Peer advocacy: Students themselves are an incredibly under-utilized college resource, and there exists an opportunity and a need to engage them. Mobilizing successful students in support of other students who face obstacles to completion helps peer advocates and mentees integrate academically and socially through key relationships and support networks, thereby influencing students’ intentions to persist in college.¹

Service-learning: Service-learning provides a high quality learning experience that promotes academic integration and performance, bolsters social competence, and empowers students to develop self-efficacy and autonomy. Together these outcomes combine to improve retention and the likelihood of completing a degree.²

Equally important, students who participate in these activities show increased interest in becoming personally and professionally involved in community change work. The ultimate result is helping students become critically, civically and globally minded graduates who will become community leaders, philanthropists and advocates who contribute to building a healthy democracy.³

When:
The pilot phase of the program began August 2011 and ended June 2014. To grow the model on the pilot campuses beyond the pilot phase, and for adoption at additional college campuses across the country, state affiliates worked in partnership with the national Campus Compact office to identify financing strategies for C2C, with an emphasis on securing new funding sources and leveraging and repurposing existing revenue streams such as federal work-study.

C2C ESSENTIALS & PROGRAM DESIGN FOR THE POST-PILOT PHASE

Essentials:
Campus Compact seeks to maintain a strong national brand for Connect2Complete in order to articulate and expand this well-developed program. Campus Compact’s Connect2Complete (C2C) expansion program model implemented by college campuses and supported by Campus Compact and state affiliates is defined by 7 essential components.

Campuses:
1. Serve low-income students enrolled in at least one developmental education course or a similar course designed to get underprepared students ready for college level coursework.
2. Utilize two primary strategies in a course-based model:
   1. Peer Advocacy: advocates/mentors (existing successful students) support their peers,
   2. Service-Learning: Developmental education/college success faculty supported by Peer Advocates utilize service-learning, a classroom based teaching pedagogy.
3. Establish a system to provide faculty training and professional development around service-learning.
4. Develop a program that can support students for multiple semesters.
5. Provide peer advocacy and service-learning training for Peer Advocates.
6. Offer at least one of the following incentives for Peer Advocates:
   a. Federal Work Study
   b. Education Awards/Scholarships

Program Design:

1. The C2C Target Population
   a. What types of campuses participate in C2C?
      In order to reach the largest populations of students who are among the most vulnerable for non-completion, the original C2C pilot focused solely on traditional community college campuses; however, because of the interest from other colleges and universities, some states have expanded the program to include these institutions. While C2C may be adapted to different types of campuses, Campus Compact developed the model and supporting resources to meet the unique needs and culture of community colleges.

   b. What is the definition of a C2C Student?
      For campuses that have developmental education, C2C students are generally first generation college and/or low-income students enrolled in at least one developmental education course.

      In states where developmental education has been eliminated or severely limited through legislative action, alternative courses designed to prepare students to be ready for college-level coursework may also be sites for C2C programming. In addition, since four year colleges often do not use the term “developmental education,” similar courses designed to get underprepared students ready for college level success may be sites for C2C. In this document, we use “developmental education students /courses” as the catch-all term.

   c. What indicators should campuses use to determine whether students are low income?
      In the early stages of the pilot, Campus Compact and The Gates Foundation saw Pell "eligibility" as a valid and practical indicator of low-income status (an important risk factor for dropping out). We have discovered, however, that while Institutional Research (IR) staff can determine who Pell recipients are, they are often unable to determine Pell-eligibility for students who have not yet received Pell funding. Campuses may work with their IR/Financial Aid departments to determine low-income indicators appropriate for their campus.

   d. What strategies can campuses use to recruit low-income, developmental education students?
      With a course-based model, it is not possible to ensure that C2C students are low-income because most courses are open to any student who enrolls, regardless of income. Based on what we know about the socio-economic status of the majority of developmental education students and the population campuses proposed reaching, we are confident that the majority of students served will be low-income.

2. A Course-Based Multiple Semester Program
   a. What does the course-based approach of peer advocacy and peer assisted service-learning look like?
      The Peer Advocate (PA) works with the instructor to attend particular classes or all classes for any of the following purposes:
      • Facilitate activities for the students to get to know one another and for the students to get to know their PA (giving up the equivalent of one or two class sessions for this early in the term can have valuable long-term impacts for promoting a collaborative learning enviroment).
      • Conduct college success workshops/activities.
      • Provide service-learning support to students and faculty.
      • Meet with C2C students informally, outside of a specific activity.

      The PAs regular presence with the class increases their accessibility to C2C students and provides an opportunity for C2C students to build trust and develop the foundation of a relationship that can deepen outside the classroom. PAs may also come to class early and/or arrive at the end of class to connect with students. In addition to supporting their peers immediately before/after and during class, Peer Advocates meet with students outside of class time in informal settings, during service-learning activities, and for campus events. Peer Advocates also connect with students through social media platforms such as Facebook.
b. What are the basic expectations for a C2C service-learning course?

- C2C faculty require all students to participate in service-learning activities.
- Reflection occurs before, during and after service activities.
- Service and civic engagement activities are connected to coursework.
- Coursework incorporates civic learning outcomes.
- Learning is documented through writing, art or other artifacts appropriate for a specific activity.
- PAs take on leadership roles in facilitating service-learning activities.

c. What are the basic elements for a multiple semester program?

- C2C students are supported beyond the first semester. Research shows that students need support for multiple semesters. Practices for engaging students over multiple semesters include regular outreach by PAs, co-curricular service opportunities, lunch gatherings, Facebook groups. There is no one set formula or model; however, at a minimum PAs do due diligence to connect with second semester C2C students, and C2C programs are encouraged to hold “reunion” events to create a culture of support for C2C students beyond the first semester.
- Every campus C2C Program Coordinator has a roster of first semester C2C students and a roster of second semester C2C students, and knows when a student is no longer a C2C student (either because they’ve finished their developmental education course, the structured program doesn’t go beyond two or three semesters, or a student is no longer responding to outreach efforts).
- Campuses have enough PAs to be able to support C2C students for multiple semesters.
- PAs know their C2C students and how many semesters their C2C students have been in the program.
- C2C Program Coordinators have formalized strategies for providing support beyond the first semester so that C2C students are clear that they are participants in the program beyond the first semester.

3. Faculty & C2C

a. How are C2C courses and faculty identified?

To select courses for C2C, campuses examine institutional data and identify English and/or math developmental education courses with historically low pass rates. Alternatively, C2C may be implemented within college success courses that students enrolled in developmental education courses are required to take. Campuses then reach out to developmental education and college success faculty who teach those courses and who are interested in working with PAs and utilizing service-learning.

b. How does the instructor work with the PA(s) matched with her/his class?

Through regular office hour meetings, the instructor and PA determine the specific classroom role and schedule of the PA consistent with the overall goals and structure of C2C developed by the campus C2C Coordinator. It often takes time for the instructor and the PA to cement their working relationship. The PA should be given some flexibility to experiment with their role as long as it is consistent with the instructor’s vision and assessment of the PA’s capabilities.

c. What type of training do faculty receive?

The C2C Program Coordinator on campus works with faculty to ensure they understand the overarching purpose of the PA in the classroom and to share strategies for faculty and the PAs to develop successful partnerships. Faculty receive training and resources around service-learning pedagogy from a trained PA and one or more of the following: a service-learning faculty liaison/civic engagement center staff member, colleagues experienced with service-learning, and/or the Compact state affiliate.
4. **The Peer Advocate (PA)**

a. What is the primary role of the Peer Advocate?

The PA role in C2C is unique. PAs help students in two primary ways:

1. PAs support students through peer advocacy. This support includes the following activities:
   - Explore identities, life experiences, self-concept to help develop a college staying identity
   - Encourage development of relationships with peers, faculty and advisors
   - Orient students to services and resources (college catalog, academic support centers, financial aid office, childcare, homeless services)
   - Help students develop college know-how (knowing how and when to ask for help, knowing how to “work” bureaucratic systems)
   - Guide students in ways that make college life easier (balancing work and family responsibilities with school, scheduling)
   - Help students increase their ability and develop strategies to successfully engage in course content (clarifying questions related to assignments, sharing student perspectives with faculty in ways that improve student learning, demonstrating use of electronic discussion boards, conducting workshops on cultural competency, sharing time management strategies for completing a long-term assignment)

2. PAs support students and faculty with service-learning activities. The PA's connection to curriculum and course content revolves primarily around service-learning activities. PAs service-learning support includes the following activities:
   - Support faculty in introducing students to service-learning pedagogy
   - Develop/maintain/assess relationships with community or campus partnerships
   - Organize logistics for service-learning
   - Participate with C2C students in service-learning activities
   - Facilitate reflection about the service-learning experience
   - Support faculty with developing and facilitating workshops that connect service and coursework to civic learning outcomes

b. What is NOT the role of the PA?

   - PAs do not provide services that duplicate resources/activities already available to students on campuses. PAs are not tutors. College campuses have academic support centers that offer tutoring services. Instead of helping a student with a math problem or editing a paper, a PA can connect the student to the appropriate campus resource.
   - PAs are not primarily teaching assistants for faculty. The PAs primary purpose is to serve C2C students.

c. What type of training do Peer Advocates receive?

High quality training for Peer Advocates is essential for peer assisted service-learning and peer advocacy to be effective. All campuses require a beginning of term Peer Advocate orientation (often retreat style) and ongoing training. Training takes the form of a free credit-bearing course or weekly non-credit meetings with the C2C Coordinator. Trainings and meetings are active and hands-on utilizing role-playing, community building activities, small group discussions and service-learning activities. PA training topics include but are not limited to:

C2C program overview, PA paperwork (timesheets, reflection journal, activity logs, goals), boundaries and ethics, the role of the Peer Advocate, service-learning and civic engagement 101, facilitating reflection, building rapport with faculty, community building exercises, student support services, diversity, communication and mentoring skills, leadership styles, and Story of Self.

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5. The Peer Advocate & The C2C Student

a. What should the ratio of PAs to C2C students be?

The ratio of PAs to C2C students should not exceed 1 to 25. Some campuses may choose to have more than one PA assigned to each class to lower the ratio.

b. What are the expectations for the C2C student experience and the PA?

- All C2C students know their PA by name and understand the role of the PA
- All C2C students know how to contact their PA
- All C2C students get mentoring support from their PA
- All C2C students participate in service-learning experiences with their PA

ONLINE RESOURCES

Available at www.compact.org/initiatives/connect2complete.

Tip Sheets:

- Peer Advocate Roles
- Peer Advocate Recruitment and Application Process
- Incentives for Peer Advocates
- Incentives for C2C Students
- Faculty Incentives
- Theory Behind C2C
- Checklist for Developing the Peer Advocate-Faculty Relationship & the Classroom Plan

Integrating Service-Learning with Peer Advocacy Into Developmental Education:

- A Manual for Connect2Complete Sub-Grantees: Innovations in Community-Engaged Learning with Developmental Education Students (Campus Compact, May 2012)
- Examples of Connect2Complete Service-Learning with Peer Advocates in Developmental Education – December 2013
- A Practical Guide for Integrating Civic Responsibility into the Curriculum – Video Modules (American Association of Community Colleges)

Peer Advocate Video Trainings:

- Identify & Self-Concept 1
- Identify & Self Concept 2
- Motivation & Self-Regulation

Mentoring (Video) Trainings for College Students and Adult Learners: www.floridacompact.org

- Defining Your Role & Expectations
- Developing Your Mentoring Relationships & How to Set Healthy Boundaries with your Mentees
- Talking it Through: Communication Skills for Mentors
- Appreciating Diversity
- Citizenship
- Disability Awareness
- Disaster Preparedness
Tallahassee Community College

Linda Bell, Student
“Connect2Complete really helped me out of a lot of fear. When I first came to college, I was really nervous, but the Peer Advocates brought me out of it. They said, “Don't worry about your age. You can do it.”

Breanna McCoy, PA
“I didn't feel prepared for college. Taking developmental education (courses) showed me the importance of studying and doing well. None of my family have graduated from college, so it pushed me to be the first in my family to graduate. But I also wanted to learn and get an education to be on a higher level.”

Professor Nancy Donovan, Faculty Fellow
“Having a Peer Advocate in the classroom, students are encouraged to talk to the instructor. They see things and hear things differently. There's a friendly culture in the classroom.”

Broward College

Tiara Morgan, Student
“I love my mentor, we met up and talked about life and school. Without my mentor I wouldn't be able to deal with the situations I'm dealing with.”

Juan Alderete, PA
“A lot of students think Broward is a last resource. But there's a lot of opportunity here. Students aren't always optimistic, so I try to change their mind. When you see the light at the end of the tunnel, you keep walking. I want to help them see that light.”

Satchel Mede, PA
“Some people see developmental classes as a setback, but for me it was a great opportunity. It built a foundation for my classes.”

Miami Dade College

Marilyn Figueroa, PA
“I wouldn't be able to graduate without the support of my peers and mentors,” Marilyn explains. “It's really important to see people our age being successful to be able to think we are capable of being successful.”

Luna Lopez, PA
“I didn't realize there were so many opportunities, there is a lot going on that helps your personal growth so much.”

Professor Nate Chapman, Faculty Fellow
“Peer Advocates guide the service-learning process and scaffold students to become leaders in service-learning.” After students participated in one Connect2Complete service project, a hunger awareness banquet, they shared with Professor Chapman the impact of the experience: “It inspired their ability to be more humble.”
ACADEMIC SUCCESS: A SNAPSHOT OF THE FALL 2012 COHORT OF C2C STUDENTS IN FLORIDA

This is a report on two measures of academic success - retention and credit hours attempted and earned - of students who started in C2C in the Fall of 2012 compared to a group of their peers for the 2012-2013 academic year. The C2C evaluation used student record data to track all the cohorts of C2C students across all terms in which they are enrolled. This is an early look at one cohort.

Number of Students in Fall 2012 Cohort Across Two Terms

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<th>Fall 2012</th>
<th>Spring 2013</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C2C</td>
<td>Comp</td>
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<tr>
<td>Florida Total</td>
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<td>8407</td>
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RETENTION - C2C students were retained at a higher rate than their comparison group peers.

Fall 2012 Cohort: Higher Retention Rate

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C2C</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>Florida Total</td>
<td>84.6%</td>
<td>312</td>
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Fall 2012 Cohort Higher Retention Rate Demonstrated In Spring 2013

- C2C Students: 84.6%
- Comparison Group: 78.5%
Three of Florida's colleges participated in this pilot program: Broward College, Miami Dade College and Tallahassee Community College. These are preliminary results from a multi-year evaluation being conducted by the Center for Youth and Communities at Brandeis University. FL|CC will provide additional information regarding final analysis and reporting when available, contact us at (850) 488-7782.

**CREDIT HOURS EARNED VERSUS ATTEMPTED** - Fall to Spring credit hour completion declined for all students, however Florida C2C students have higher credit hour completion rates than their comparison group peers in both semesters.

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<td>Florida Total</td>
<td>80.6%</td>
<td>369</td>
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**Fall 2012:**

- **C2C Successful Completion Rate:**
  - Fall 2012: 80.6%
  - Spring 2013: 75.3%

**Spring 2013:**

- **C2C Successful Completion Rate:**
  - Spring 2013: 69.4%
FLORIDA C2C STUDENT PROFILES

Tiara Morgan, a first-year student at Broward College, is working hard to be the first in her family to graduate from college. At 19 years old, Tiara is taking college courses, working two jobs, and finds time to be involved in leadership roles and campus activities at Broward College. One reason for pushing herself: Tiara hopes to be a role model for her two younger sisters. But it’s not always easy. Particularly in her first semester, it was a challenge to choose courses and to balance work and school commitments.

Fortunately, Tiara has a role model of her own – a C2C Peer Advocate at Broward. “I love my mentor,” Tiara exclaims, “We met up and talked about life and school. Without my mentor I wouldn’t be able to deal with the situations I’m dealing with.” Tiara’s Peer Advocate helps her to choose courses that will be a good fit, gives study skill advice, and connects her to campus resources she likely wouldn’t know about otherwise.

In addition, Tiara’s Peer Advocate encouraged her to participate in the service-learning projects that C2C coordinates, such as walking for cancer research and fundraising for early childhood care. Those opportunities have made an impact on Tiara: “Going to service projects and meeting new people really helped me come out of my shell. It helped me to not be so shy and reserved, to be more friendly and talkative.” Because of C2C and the support of her Peer Advocate, Tiara says, “I want to be a role model to someone. I want to make a change.”

When Linda Bell came to Tallahassee Community College (TCC) after 25 years of being out of school, she was not sure she would succeed. To get her ready for college-level work, Linda was placed in developmental Math and English, as well as a college success course. Through her college success course, her teacher Sarah Crockett encouraged her to join C2C. And she’s glad she did: “I would have it no other way. C2C keeps me going.”

With the help of C2C, Peer Advocates have helped Linda choose courses, improve her computer skills, learn about financial aid, and feel more confident: “C2C really helped me out of a lot of fear. When I first came to college, I was really nervous, but the Peer Advocates brought me out of it. They said, “Don’t worry about your age. You can do it.” In addition, C2C has allowed Linda to participate in service projects in the community, sending classroom decorations and letters to elementary school students and supporting a local food drive.

When she started at TCC, Linda explains, she was struggling: “I was beginning to give up until I learned about this program.” Now in her third semester, Linda is helping other students on campus – participating in new student orientation and telling them about the importance of having a Peer Advocate. Linda hopes to be a Peer Advocate herself in the future: “C2C changed me because I learned things I hadn’t learned in 25 years. I wouldn’t even think about picking up a book. Now I can open my math book and know how it goes. I am so excited, I feel excited about school.”
FLORIDA PEER ADVOCATE PROFILES

As a C2C Peer Advocate at Broward College, Juan Alderete knows that there are a lot of opportunities to take advantage of at the college. Unfortunately, for many students it is difficult to stay informed of these opportunities and connect to campus resources. For Juan, originally from Argentina, the challenge was deciding which academic path he wanted to pursue and finding the best classes.

Juan hopes to change that for the students he mentors through C2C: “A lot of students think Broward is a last resource. But there’s a lot of opportunity here. Students aren’t always optimistic, so I try to change their mind. When you see the light at the end of the tunnel, you keep walking. I want to help them see that light.” To do this, Juan helps students make an academic plan, strengthen time management skills, and invites students to shadow his day at the college – where he is an Honors College student. In addition, Juan connects students to service-learning projects, such as recycling old computers and cell phones to raise money for a good cause – and students meet one another in the process.

Juan will graduate from Broward College this summer with a finance degree, and plans to continue to his Bachelor’s Degree before pursuing a career in banking. C2C has allowed Juan to become more open minded, and he has appreciated dedicating a few hours a week to other students – instead of always focusing on his own studies. As for the future of C2C, Juan says, “It is very needed in this community. There is nothing like it.”

Luna Lopez didn’t always plan to go to Miami Dade College. After completing high school in Miami, she returned to her home country of Colombia to pursue a career in fashion design. Luna soon realized that she wouldn’t be able to give back to her community the way she wanted to, and came to Miami Dade College to chart a different path. But in her first semester, Luna didn’t take advantage of all of the resources available to her at Miami Dade College.

“I didn’t realize there were so many opportunities, there is a lot going on that helps your personal growth so much,” Luna says. “In my first semester, I would go to school and take the bus back home. But if you can stay on campus for thirty minutes after class, why not?” By her second semester, Luna was ready to get involved and found a way to give back to Miami Dade College – by becoming a C2C Peer Advocate.

Now as a Peer Advocate, Luna helps students access financial aid resources, get involved with service-learning opportunities, and choose their classes. When one of her mentees seemed particularly lost, Luna was able to help: “She didn’t really know how to plan out her future or even pick her classes. In high school, everything is already picked out for you. We started to get to know each other and I helped her look at her options. She hadn’t really been able to do that before.” On track to graduate from Miami Dade College this summer, Luna plans to transfer to complete her Bachelor’s Degree. When asked about the future of C2C, Luna’s answer is simple: “I just hope that this program sticks around.”
FLORIDA FACULTY FELLOW PROFILES

At Miami Dade College, Professor Eddie “Nate” Chapman supports new students in their transition to college through a college success course that he teaches. Professor Chapman also teaches a leadership development course, which helps to train Peer Advocates for C2C. Peer Advocates are paired with C2C students: “Their role is to help students get acquainted with the school. It’s someone students know they can go to on a peer level, a familiar face.”

Together, Peer Advocates and their mentees develop service-learning projects on topics that have included advocacy against human trafficking, hunger and homelessness awareness, and civic engagement. Professor Chapman explains: “Peer Advocates guide the service-learning process and scaffold students to become a leader in service-learning.” After students participated in one C2C service project, a hunger awareness banquet, they shared with Professor Chapman the impact of the experience: “It inspired their ability to be more humble.”

C2C students also learn from the relationships they build in the process: “They learn that you can connect to other peers. Typically students go to class and don’t know other people. They connect to mentors and peers in their classroom. They have a better connection with staff, and connections to professors in class.” Professor Chapman explains, “Students with Peer Advocates had a stronger bond at the end of the semester.” C2C has impacted Professor Chapman’s teaching too: “There’s an emphasis on the idea of connection. Although you might not have a Peer Advocate, you can bring in other students to be a link.”

As a faculty member at Tallahassee Community College, Professor Nancy Donovan has seen that her students sometimes have trouble talking to instructors. With the help of C2C, students are more likely to speak up: “Having a Peer Advocate in the classroom, students are encouraged to talk to the instructor. They see things and hear things differently. There’s a friendly culture in the classroom.” Peer Advocates also provide Professor Donovan a unique view on classroom activities: “It’s collaborative. The Peer Advocates think of activities that would be good coming from a student. They have a fresh perspective.”

Professor Donovan has seen a change in her classes since participating in C2C: “They seem more confident and relaxed. Students are very engaged and comfortable.” Professor Donovan says, her classes with Peer Advocates have higher test scores. In addition to having the support of a Peer Advocate, Professor Donovan’s C2C classes have also begun to engage in service-learning this semester. Her students are writing letters to high school students to tell them what they have learned in college and to offer advice: “They are reflecting on high school,” Professor Donovan explains, “Realizing the more connections you have, the more aware you are when you make choices.” Professor Donovan has also noticed that having the support of a Peer Advocate has helped students with disabilities engage more fully in her classes: “Peer Advocates are able to help bridge the gaps.” Overall, Professor Donovan reflects, “C2C has been a wonderful addition. It has really upped our ability to serve students.”
Mission:
Florida Campus Compact advances the civic purposes of colleges and universities by deepening their ability to improve community life and to educate students for civic and social responsibility.

Goals:

- To enrich the quality of academic instruction through a broader, more engaged collegiate learning experience.
- To strengthen academics and civic engagement through reciprocal campus-community partnerships.
- To support communities in Florida through symbiotic campus-community collaboration.
- To inspire leadership and civic responsibility for conscientious citizenship in a participatory democracy.
- To contribute to the development of a better prepared and more knowledgeable workforce.

JOIN FL|CC

1. College and University Presidents are the official members of Florida Campus Compact. Presidents begin the process by sending a letter expressing interest in joining (a sample letter of interest can be found on our website).

2. Provide two additional points of contact, one from Student Affairs and one from Academic Affairs including names and complete contact information.

3. Upon receipt of invoice, send membership dues according to the established dues structure (a dues chart is located on our website).

4. Keep all contact information current with the Florida Campus Compact office.

Call (850) 488-7782 or visit www.floridacompact.org to join
Tallahassee Community College C2C Students and Peer Advocates

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Access & Success (CPV) Digital Toolkit
www.thecompactaccess2success.com