

College Prep Pointers



These tips will help your teen feel less overwhelmed in planning for higher education.

Starting the college planning process early can help your child be better organized, less stressed, make more informed decisions, and even get into a better school. Use this checklist from Tony Di Giacomo, Ph.D., founder of Novella Prep (novellaprep.com) to help get you started.

10th Grade:

- Make sure your child takes the PSAT in October.
- Have him sign into collegeboard.org and link his scores to Khan Academy for free online lessons based on his results.
- Discuss your child's possible career interests. Reach out to people in these fields.
- Help your child begin a one-page resume to document her accomplishments and skills. She will need this information for her college applications next year.
- Compile a list of prospective colleges, along with the schools' admission requirements.
- Consider having your child take pre-college classes at a college this summer or next.
- Encourage her to work in a field of interest over the summer.

11th Grade:

- Have your child take the PSAT/NMSQT in October. Link the scores to Khan Academy for more recommended lessons.
- Schedule college visits.
- Figure out when your child will take his first SAT or ACT and how he plans to prepare for it.
- If she takes AP courses, have her plan to spend approximately eight weeks reviewing for each AP exam.
- Visit colleges.
- Encourage him to finish all college essays over the summer.

12th Grade:

- Submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid in October. Check with the financial aid offices of any schools to which your child will be applying to see if anything else is needed.

- Schedule 1-on-1 college interviews for your child, on campus if possible. Have him send thank-you notes.
- Along with your child, make a spreadsheet and schedule appointments for all important deadlines through the year's end.
- Plan for her applications to be submitted one week early.
- Have him follow up by phone or email to verify that each application is complete.
- Breathe! Encourage your child to have productive conversations with friends and family and only share what is essential.



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