



Resource 8

Helping Your Child Plan for the Future

Parents can help their children prepare for the future beginning in kindergarten. Use the checklist below as you help your child prepare for life after high school.

In **grades K-5** the focus is on **career awareness**. You can help your child by doing the following:

- Discuss the many employment opportunities available in and outside of your community.
- Display positive attitudes toward work and cooperating with others.
- Show attitudes of respect and appreciation towards workers in all fields.
- Familiarize yourself with the New Mexico Content Standards and ask teachers about how your child is doing in meeting the standards.
- Borrow books from libraries about various careers to share with your child and ask him/her what they think they would like to do for a career.

In **Grades 6-8** the focus is on **career exploration**. You can help your child by doing the following:

- Meet with your child's counselor to review course selection and ask for tools to help your child assess their own interests and abilities.
- Assist your child with challenging course selection such as honors courses, pre-advanced placement classes, Pre-Algebra or Algebra 1, a language other than English and academic preparation programs such as Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID).
- Attend parent nights, parent-teacher conferences and school activities that focus on career exploration and college preparation.
- Inquire about tutoring and mentoring programs at the school.
- Use the internet at home, school and/or the library to explore careers and job requirements.
- Review all homework assignments and maintain communication with teachers and counselors.
- Assist your child in developing good study habits.
- Work with your children to set goals each year.
- Familiarize yourself with both high school graduation requirements and college entrance requirements.

In **grades 9-12** the focus is on **career preparation**. You can help your child by doing the following:

- o Ask teachers and counselors about the state mandated exam for high schools.
- o Encourage your child to continue with languages other than English with bilingualism as the goal.
- o Talk with teachers and counselors to ensure that your child takes the pre-ACT/SAT (plan test) as a sophomore and the SAT or ACT first as a junior and then again as a senior.
- o Encourage your child to take good notes during classes.
- o Encourage your child to take the right sequence of mathematics: Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, and Trigonometry.
- o Encourage your child to develop and enhance computer skills.
- o Model time management and organizational skills.
- o Assist your child in developing money management and independent living skills.
- o Encourage your child to participate in extracurricular activities such as student council, MESA (Math, Engineering and Science Achievement), sports and community service projects.
- o Request college and career planning guides from the school counselor and/or the US Department of Education.
- o Request information about financing vocational training and/or college costs.

Source: Building Toward a Better Future: A College Planning Guide for Students and Their Families, U. S. Department of Energy
www.science.doe.gov