

Elementary School Checklist

Beginning to plan for college in elementary school may seem early, but we assure you it is not. We find that establishing routines while children are just getting started in their educational journey helps set them up for success.

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- Create a daily schedule.** Allow time for eating, homework, fun and sleep.

 - Add school calendar dates on family calendar.**

 - Try a new activity.** Now is a great time to try something new, like a sport, a club or volunteer work.

 - Visit your local library.** Regular reading expands your mind and helps you become a better student.

 - Start saving for higher education.** Use available resources, such as the College Planners at CommunityAmerica, to help develop a Family Education Philosophy.

Middle School Checklist

Middle School is where students begin having more academic choices. Becoming more involved in extracurricular activities and the community may help your child discover their passion and, possibly, their future career. It takes the cooperation of parents and students to ensure goals are met.

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- Make a commitment to succeed in school and attend higher education.** Set academic goals as a family to include good attendance, sleep and developing good study habits.

 - Take challenging courses.** Enroll in appropriate or special curriculum options that will prepare the student to take college-ready courses in high school.

 - Build good habits.** Stay organized, be involved, and do your best to succeed but don't be afraid to ask your teachers for help or advice.

 - Keep reading.** Don't lose the love of reading. Include reading for 30 minutes as part of your day.

 - Begin an Activity Log.** Track any volunteering/extracurricular activities and keep a log of hours spent. Save this information for future applications to schools and scholarships.

 - Participate/Volunteer in school, community, organizations and clubs.** Track on Activity Log.

 - Explore career possibilities by getting involved in projects.** Track on Activity Log.

 - Match interests to careers.** List your hobbies and talents. Then match up the things on your list with different career opportunities.

 - Start/continue saving for higher education.** Use available resources, such as the College Planners at CommunityAmerica, to develop a Family Education Philosophy.
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Parent Checklist

Here are a few things to remember as you help your child navigate their elementary and secondary education years:

Be involved in child's life, both academically and socially. Attend all parent events, regularly check school's website and stay on top of teacher communications.

Encourage a healthy lifestyle. This includes healthy eating and sleep habits as well as participation in school and extracurricular activities.

Be a good listener. Recognize the changes your child will experience during these years.

Allow your child to develop their personality. While you want to support your child, it is equally important they develop problem-solving skills.

Set a good example. If school isn't important to you, then it likely won't be important to your child.

Be realistic about saving and budgeting for college. College will be one of the most expensive purchases you ever make; approach it as you would any other financial expense. Understand your budget and stick to it.

Ask for help. Planning for higher education can feel overwhelming. And while it may feel far away, your child will graduate before you know it. At CommunityAmerica, we have experts in College and Career Planning who can help you through the entire process. For more information or to schedule an appointment, go to **CommunityAmerica.com/College-Career-Planning**.