

# PARENT CHECKLIST



You have big dreams for your children: postsecondary education, a home, a great career. These are just a few things you hope for your children, but how can you help them get there? Making sure they're on track from 8th grade through high school will ensure a smooth transition into college and career and help your child achieve his dreams. Use this Parent Checklist to help your child dream, create a plan, work hard, and keep track of his progress along the way.

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

- Think about life after high school as an important part of your child's future and discuss your ideas about education after high school as a family.
- Explore the different postsecondary education options for your child to determine which will be the best fit to help him meet his future goals. Options include community college, university, the military, technical institutes, and apprenticeships.
- Encourage your child to explore careers and identify his interests. Look into what type of credential your child will need for those jobs – associate's degree, bachelor's degree, certificate, license or other professional degree.
- Build a relationship with your child's teachers or school counselors. Check in with them regularly to understand where your child is doing well and where he needs to improve.
- Help reinforce what your child is learning in school. Download grade-level academic milestones and tips at [ExpectMoreArizona.org](http://ExpectMoreArizona.org) to see some of the key things your child will be learning in 8th grade.
- Encourage good study habits at home. Make sure your child completes homework on time.
- Encourage your child to prepare for college by taking challenging courses at each grade level.
- If you haven't already, start saving money for college. Savings accounts and 529 Plans are great ways to get started.



## 9<sup>th</sup> Grade

- All Arizona students will complete an Education Career Action Plan (ECAP) in 9th grade. Make an appointment with your child and his school counselor to discuss the ECAP, and make a point to revisit it each year throughout high school.
- Make sure your child is on track for postsecondary education by making sure he is taking the right classes. Students need 4 English, 4 math, 3 science, 2 social studies, 2 foreign language, and 1 CTE or fine arts credit for entry into an Arizona university. Other institutions have different requirements, so be sure to look into those with your child.
- Encourage and expect good grades, attendance, and on-time homework.
- Download grade-level academic milestones for high school at [ExpectMoreArizona.org](http://ExpectMoreArizona.org) to see what your child will be learning in English and math.
- Have your child save examples of his best work in one place. These samples will be helpful when your child prepares his application essays for college, applies for scholarships, or prepares his first resume.
- Get involved in parent groups at your child's high school. Model the behavior you expect from your child by engaging in his sports, clubs, or academics as a parent volunteer.
- Take your child to a college campus and walk around. While there, ask him questions about what he thinks about college and what his future dreams are.
- Encourage your child to be involved in extracurricular activities that interest him. Participating in community service, school clubs, sports, the arts, or work experience will help your child explore his interests and build valuable experience outside the classroom. Have your child keep a list of the activities he is involved in.
- Continue to save money for postsecondary education.



## 10<sup>th</sup> Grade

- Schedule a meeting with the school counselor to revisit your child's ECAP. Make sure he is taking classes that will keep him on a path toward college and career.
- Ask your child which colleges or training programs interest him and request brochures. Your child's high school counselor is a great place to start getting more information on colleges or advanced training programs.
- Show support for your child's academic success by making sure you know when big tests will take place. Ensure your child is well rested and eats a healthy breakfast on testing days.
- Plan ahead for the summer. Colleges frequently offer camps for high school students to get a taste of college life. Speak with your child's high school counselor to see if local colleges or universities are offering programs in your area.
- Encourage your child to volunteer or seek out a summer internship in his career area of interest.
- Have your child continue to save examples of his best work in one place and participate in extracurricular activities.
- Continue to save money for college.

## 11<sup>th</sup> Grade

- Schedule another meeting with the school counselor to revisit your child's ECAP to ensure he is on track and enrolled in the right courses to meet his goals.
- Encourage your child to enroll in courses that allow him to earn college credit while still in high school. Consider dual enrollment, Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate programs.
- Sign your child up to take the PSAT in the fall. Students who do well on the PSAT may earn a scholarship for college. Talk to your child's high school counselor for more information.
- Check in with your child's teachers to make sure your child is staying on top of homework and understands his coursework.
- Encourage your child to register to take the ACT or SAT in the spring. Talk to your child's counselor as many schools are able to waive the test registration fee if the student cannot afford it.
- Use the FAFSA4caster tool at [fafsa4caster.ed.gov](https://fafsa4caster.ed.gov) to find out how much federal student aid your child may qualify for.
- Encourage your child to seek out and apply for scholarships.
- If your child is not on track to graduate, speak with his counselor about credit recovery options.
- Encourage your child to get a summer job or internship in his area of interest.
- Finding the right college should be a family decision. Use the free College Scorecard to find out more about a college's affordability and value so you can make an informed decision. [CollegeCost.ed.gov/Scorecard](https://CollegeCost.ed.gov/Scorecard).
- Continue to keep examples of his best work and encourage participation in extracurricular activities. Note any leadership roles your child has played.
- Continue to save money for college.



Encourage your child to visit [CreateYourNext.com](https://CreateYourNext.com), an online career exploration and planning tool to create his own personal plan today.

## 12<sup>th</sup> Grade

- Guard against Senior-itis! Students often see their senior year as one they can “coast through”. But good grades and taking rigorous courses are factors in scholarship decisions and in your child’s postsecondary success.
- Ensure your child is on track to graduate by revisiting his ECAP with his counselor. Speak with the school counselor about credit recovery options, if needed.
- Continue to encourage participation in dual enrollment, AP or International Baccalaureate programs.
- Make sure your child is taking a math course his senior year to ensure he keeps his skills current before transitioning to college, a university or another training program.
- Encourage your child to visit at least one campus of a college or university to which he has applied. Make sure your child has applied to his colleges of interest no later than Thanksgiving. There are many steps in the application process; personal statements/essays, letters of recommendation, official transcripts, etc. Work through the application process as a family and make sure your child allows himself enough time to complete and submit all of the materials.
- Make sure your child has completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by mid-February at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).
- Seek out summer programs offered by a local college or university and encourage your child to participate. These programs help your child know what to expect in college and can provide interventions to ensure he is on track for success.
- Encourage your child to continue to seek out and apply for scholarships. His high school counselor will have information on a variety of scholarships to consider.
- Continue to save money for college.



Visit [ExpectMoreArizona.org](http://ExpectMoreArizona.org) for additional resources to help your child succeed and sign up to receive more information.