

DISCOVER PARENT GUIDE: SUPPORT YOUR CHILD'S AFTER HIGH SCHOOL PLANS

This guide was created by Northern Arizona University and Arizona GEAR UP, and has been adapted for Parents by VSAC GEAR UP. VSAC GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) is a U.S. Department of Education federally funded program. Our Outreach Counselors and staff work every day to increase high school graduation and post-secondary enrollment rates across the state. The federal government does not endorse this Guide, nor do its contents necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education.

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When we address "parents" we're including every adult who takes the time to be part of the lives and education of students. We are grateful for all of the adults who take care of students.



VERMONT
GearUP
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Help Your Child Discover Success

The Vermont Agency of Education has parent, family, and community engagement resources here:
<https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/parent-family-and-community-engagement>
Please visit their site for specific tips and tools.

post·sec·ond·ary ed·u·ca·tion

/ˈpōst-ʃe-kən-ˈder- e-jə-ˈkā-shən/

1. Training and classes beyond high school



Every parent wants the best for their children, and Vermont State GEAR UP wants to help you and your student plan for life after high school. We know high school graduation seems a long way off, but it'll be here before you know it.

By the time your child graduates from high school, nearly 70% of jobs will require some kind of additional education or training, which refers to post-secondary education.

For current and future jobs-seekers willing to invest in training and/or education after high school, it is clear: promising employment opportunities are already available throughout Vermont for people of all interests and backgrounds. More information about job prospects and outlook may be found here: www.mcclurevt.org/most-promising-jobs/, <https://labor.vermont.org>, and at <https://advancevermont.org>

Your child may want to pursue one of several options: a four-year college or university; community college; trade and technical school; the military or a certificate program, or may want to start working following high school. Family can play a huge role in keeping students on track to discover plans following high school.

You may also be considering a career move or educational credential. If so, please reach out to your VSAC counselor for guidance and information. We can connect you to our adult EOC counselor in your area.

So, now is a good time to begin a plan, but you're not alone. As part of Vermont State GEAR UP, you, as a parent member of GEAR UP have access to information, activities, and checklists to help prepare for high school and beyond through our website and with your student's Outreach Counselor.



Please visit our library of career videos at: <https://www.vsac.org/vermont-career-connect>

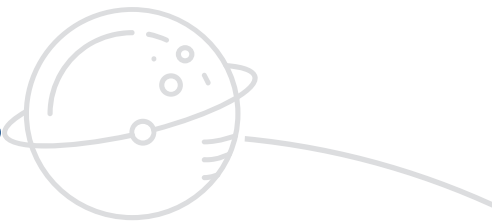
Food for thought: One thing to remember throughout this process is that your student is going through the very rigorous process of growing, exploring, and learning. Our children are evolving into who they are, who they want to be, and what they like to do. This is almost guaranteed to change over time.

Listen and watch for their developing talents and interests. Instead of feeling like there are just boxes to check, encourage curiosity and an exploration of their interests. Help them express and manage emotions, relationships, and being open to possibilities.

The most important thing is to support their journey by listening to them - with all of the missteps, emotions, changes, and challenges that they will experience to create their own path. This helps pave the way for all of the things they'll need to know when they launch into the world after high school.



Support 7th Grade Success



Along with your child's teacher, you play an important role in your child's educational and developmental success. But what's the best way to help? On the next couple pages, you will find a few standards and benchmarks. We've even included a few home activities, so you can help your student practice. Remember, all students learn and advance in their own time. You know your child. Let them know you are there for their journey - wherever that may take them!

English Language Arts & Literacy Standards:

- Increase focus on reading comprehension and vocabulary.
- Draw conclusions from the text to interpret the author's ideas.
- Read closely (carefully) to find main ideas and supporting details in a variety of texts.
- Identify and describe the different strategies authors use to communicate.
- Continue to write clear and coherent texts for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Home Activities:

Create a word of the week. Let your child choose a word and tape it to the refrigerator. Encourage your child to use the word in conversation.

Ask your child what they're reading. Listen as they re-tell the story.

Doing these activities in ANY language can support your child's developing literacy skills. Try these in your home language or any other language you want to practice.



Mathematics Standards:

- Explain and interpret the rules for adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing with negative numbers, as well as fractions.
- Understand ratios and solve a variety of percentage problems (calculating discounts, interest, tax, tips, percent increase, and percent decrease).
- Graph and understand proportional relationships. (For example, if oranges are sold in a bag of 5 for \$2, the ratio of oranges to their cost is 5:2 or $5/2$.)
- Use scale drawings to represent the relationship among objects.

Home Activities:

Using geometry principles, ask your student to create a scale drawing of a soccer field. Include goals, goal area, penalty area, and halfway line.

Ask your child to calculate the sales tax of 6% the next time you're in a store.



Development Benchmarks:

Social & Emotional Learning:

- Become more independent while seeking encouragement.
- Belong to a group and having friends is important.
- Can take on more responsibility for themselves and things at home.
- Maintain many interests, curiosity, and seek experiences.
- Begin independent thinking but still easily influenced by others.

Students Should Learn to:

- Identify personal interests, abilities, strengths, and weaknesses.
- Describe how work at home and/or school relates to jobs in the community.
- Describe why work is important and to be curious about the world and career paths.
- Describe how personal beliefs and values affect decision-making.

How Parents Can Help (most importantly listen and observe, allow for mistakes and growth, continue to encourage progress):

- Talk to your child about the reading, writing, and math you do in everyday life.
- Praise good habits at home, with friends, and gradually increase responsibilities.
- Encourage good habits; nutrition, sleep, responsibility, timely assignments, study times, family, friends, and community
- Urge your child to read every week and participate in creative and physical activities, which reduce screen time.
- Recognize effort, even if they fail. Talk about what they learned, and how they can improve next time.
- Assign different kinds of chores to people in your household to share and contribute.
- Comment on different kinds of jobs; ask your child if the work looks interesting and why (or why not).
- Listen as your child makes decisions; discuss peer pressure in relation to their values and goals.
- Build a relationship with your child's teachers and school counselor and check in regularly. Ask about services and supports if your child is struggling.

Support 8th Grade Success

As your child gets older, you can still help in a variety of ways. On the next couple pages, find tips for helping your eighth grader succeed.

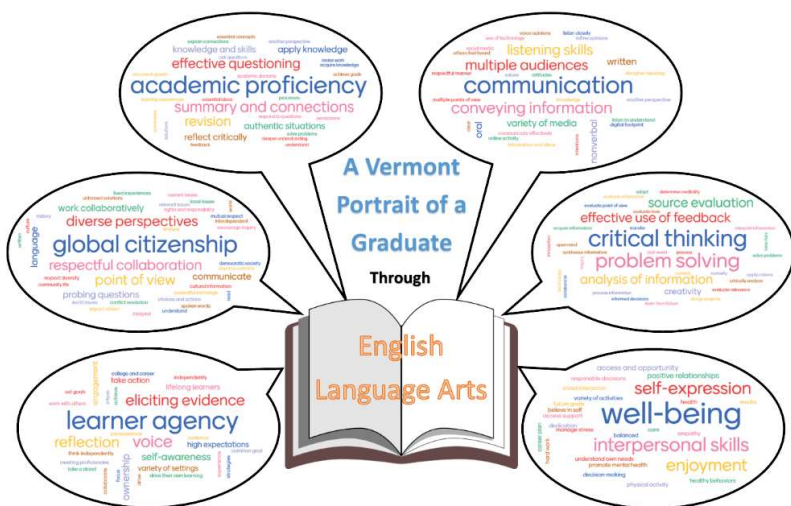
English Language Arts & Literacy Standards:

- Determine a text's central idea, supporting ideas/events, and analyze how it unfolds.
- Compare and contrast the organization of multiple texts and analyze how they differ and contribute to the meaning.
- Analyze how an author uses point of view and presents conflicting evidence and viewpoints.
- Determine the meaning of unfamiliar words and use them in everyday speaking and writing.

Home Activities:

Ask your child to write out the lyrics to their favorite song and define any unfamiliar words. Use those words in conversations throughout the week.

Doing these activities in ANY language can support your child's developing literacy skills. Try these in your home language or any other language you want to practice.



Mathematics Standards:

- Understand connections between proportional relationships, lines, and linear equations. (For example, if oranges are sold in a bag of 5 for \$2, the ratio of oranges to their cost is 5:2 or $5/2$.)
- Understand and apply the Pythagorean Theorem ($a^2 + b^2 = c^2$).
- Use linear equations and systems of linear equations to represent, analyze, and solve a variety of problems.
- Solve real-world and mathematical problems involving volume of cylinders, cones, and spheres.

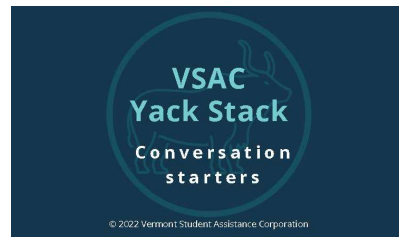
Home Activities:

Practice measuring the perimeter of common household items like picture frames and practice estimating the area of various rooms in your home.

Development Benchmarks (it's important to keep listening for understanding. In addition to the ideas below, Vermont GEAR UP has family conversation cards for you to help with these conversations - just ask your Outreach Counselor):

Social & Emotional Learning:

- Undergo dramatic physical changes.
- Seek approval from peer groups and adults.
 - Desire a unique identity apart from parents' influence.
 - Want more independence.
 - Express curiosity but haven't developed planning skills.
- Voice opinions openly.

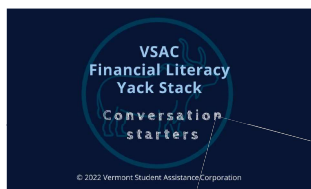


Students Should Learn to:

- Demonstrate effective skills in working with others.
- Show appreciation for the similarities and differences among people.
- Understand required skills for various roles (for example, finance jobs require attention to detail).
 - Identify strategies for managing personal finances.
 - Exhibit skills needed to obtain and keep a job (punctuality, respect, clear communication, honesty, dependability).

How Parents Can Help:

- Share what happened with your days; point out the positives, work through the challenges.
- Discuss your child's skills, interests, abilities, and goals to help plan for the future. Talk about your own work and interests. How did you come into the work you do? What are your career interests?
- Encourage participation in service-oriented activities in the community.
- Teach your child about various work with "take your child to work" days, field trips, career fairs at schools or in the community.
- Explain money management and allow your child to make some financial choices. **Request the Financial Literacy VSAC Yack Stack** from your VSAC Outreach Counselor.
- Encourage children to work part-time (for example, dog-walking, pet-sitting, weeding, shoveling, or raking).
- Encourage realistic practices for your child's (workload, deadlines, time management) and provide constructive feedback.
- Support and encourage a challenging but not overwhelming school schedule. Keep an eye on your child's grades and test scores. Provide constructive feedback and seek tutoring when needed.
- Discuss your child's hopes for their future; share your hopes and aspirations for them, including post-secondary education.



Attendance Matters



Along with your child's teacher, you play an important role in classroom attendance. But what's the best way to help? Below, find a few expected standards and benchmarks. We've even included a few pointers to help keep your student on track.

Did You Know?

- By 9th grade, regular attendance is a stronger prediction of graduation rates than 8th grade test scores.
- Tardiness may lead to poor attendance.
- Research states that students shouldn't miss more than nine school days, per year, to remain on track and engaged.
- In Vermont, there are requirements for school attendance: 4 unexcused consecutive days or 10 days annually are considered "truant". Communication with your school is key.
- We know there are a number of reasons why students miss school - and accommodations can be made for students who need them.
- Absences can indicate many challenges a student might face, including but not limited to: a traumatic event or events, a student's lack of interest in school, struggle with schoolwork, negative peer pressure, or potential drug use.

Help Your Teen Stay Engaged

- Find out if your child feels engaged with their classes and safe from bullies or other threats. Work with the school if your child experiences behavioral problems.
- Stay on top of academic progress and seek help from teachers or tutors if necessary.
- Know your child's social contacts. Peer pressure can lead to skipping school, while students without many friends can feel isolated.
- Encourage meaningful after-school activities, including sports and clubs.

What You Can Do

- Make school attendance a priority every day.
- Expect your child to attend school everyday and talk about the importance of school attendance.
- Help your child maintain daily routines, such as finishing homework and getting a good night's sleep.
- Try not to schedule dental and medical appointments during the school day.
- Social media changes frequently and can be helpful or stressful for students. Check-in with your student about their experiences with social media and if it's affecting their social-emotional health or learning.

Communicate with the School

- Know the school's attendance policy— incentives and penalties.
- Talk to teachers if you notice sudden changes in behavior, which could indicate problems at school.
- Check on your child's attendance to make sure they're not truant.
- Ask for help from school officials, afterschool programs, other parents, or community agencies if you experience truancy issues with your child.

Transition to High School

Independence Brings Responsibility

Your child may get excited about the new sense of freedom when they enter high school. They'll get to build their own schedule, choose classes, and participate in all kinds of extracurricular activities. The choices they make can lead to success if they create and follow an effective plan. Remember, plans and interests change frequently. This is natural! Follow their lead with interests and opportunities.

Three Steps to Success

1 Choose the Right Courses

High schools offer many different types of courses—core courses, elective courses, honors courses, AP/IB courses, dual-enrollment courses, career and technical education courses, and more.

- Encourage your child to take college preparatory coursework. These courses meet high school graduation requirements and satisfies college preparatory expectations for most Vermont colleges.
- Career and Technical education provides a strong career foundation - don't rule this out if your student's skills and interests are here.
- Talk with your child about taking **balanced classes** that will challenge them and align with their abilities. If college is a possibility taking the core college preparatory courses provides options after graduation.
- Suggest your child take **elective courses** that relate to their interests and help them develop future job skills such as computer science or creative writing.

2 Grades Matter

In most high schools, any grade between an A and a D will earn a credit that will count toward high school graduation; however, universities review students' overall grade point average (GPA) to determine admission eligibility and scholarship awards. So, the higher the grades and more challenging the coursework, the higher the GPA students earn. This can lead to your child feeling more confident in their ability to master each content area. A higher GPA may mean more opportunities for a student to earn scholarships and admission to their university of choice.

Grades matter for all options after high school. Whatever path your student takes, a strong foundation, good work ethic, and ability to keep learning will serve them well.

Effort and focus impact your child's schoolwork. Encourage your child to ask questions, participate in class and assignments, and to work hard. However, continue to observe and be in touch with the amount of stress your student is under to be sure it's manageable and not causing undue harm. There are many options for life after high school!

3 Seek Support

Connect with a school counselor or teacher your child trusts to ask for guidance and support. Encourage your child to develop a relationship with caring mentors and trusted advocates who know them and know their interests.

Find out if there are student peer groups that align with your child's interests. Whether it's sports, a school club, or friends who share similar passions, it will help with high school transitions.

Choosing appropriate courses that are challenging and reflective of student interests and exploration can provide a strong foundation for options after high school.

Often times approaching teachers, school staff, or counselors causes some apprehension - maybe your student can send an email explaining their needs before meeting. Walk through their checklist and see what you can do together so they enter the next conversation with confidence.

Transition to High School (cont.)

Support Self-Discovery

Students become more motivated, self-directed learners when they understand the relationship between academics, career and educational planning, and achieving their own goals. Participating in a wide variety of options and experiences allows individuals to discover what they are good at, what they like to do, and what could lead to a career.

You can help by reviewing the Guide with your child and discussing responses to the completed exercises.

Let them lead the way. Follow and guide them as you learn together. We hope this information and these exercises give you a good idea of how you can support them to achieve their goals.



Does Your Child Have a Plan?

Developing a Plan is helpful to include in a portfolio for all Vermont high school graduates. Our Outreach Counselors develop post-secondary plans with students to ensure they get on the right track to achieve career interests and goals. On the following pages are samples of plans you can use, too.

It's never too early to develop a plan, and studies show many positive effects of early career exploration and planning:

- ❖ Clear goals and plans keep teens more motivated and less likely to drop out of school.
- ❖ Students with career plans achieve higher levels of education than those who do not.
- ❖ Listen for interests and plans to change as your student is exposed to more experiences and courses. Ask questions, provide opportunities to experience interests as you are able.
- ❖ Global competition and rapidly changing technology require workers to retrain often, so students engaged in the act of learning remain nimble and ready to meet future challenges.

Creating a plan that develops and changes with your child's learning begins the process of recording coursework and experiences for resume development and can also promote consideration of other opportunities such as: dual enrollment, AP courses, or early college.

Educational Pathways



No one path guarantees success. Some students will pursue a four-year degree. Others may want to earn a certificate to join a skilled trade, and others may want to join the military. Regardless of the path your child takes, it helps to know the steps needed to achieve their goals. The chart below provides examples of career options and the education required, which will help them flesh out plans.

Credentials	Some Career Examples*	Where to Obtain
Certificate: awarded for a defined set of requirements and coursework. Certificate of Completion (CCL), Academic Certificate (AC), and Certificate of Competency (CC) are three examples.	Dental assistant, motorcycle mechanic, electrician, HVAC tech, masseuse, welder, cosmetologist, digital media, medical assistant, IT	Many 4 year colleges offer certificate programs Community Colleges Career and Technical Centers
Associate degree: granted after a two-year course of study. Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), and Associate of Applied Science (AAS) are three common examples.	Web developers, mechanical/ industrial engineering tech, occupational therapy assistant, paralegal, air traffic controller	Community college or some residential colleges in or out of state.
Bachelor's degree: earned at a college or university, usually after four-years of study. (Bachelor of Science (BS), Bachelor of Arts (BA), and Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) are three examples.	Teacher, architect, marketing manager, engineer, registered nurse, journalist, computer programmer, software developer	Four-year university or college Transfer Programs (2+2, 3+1). Students can also start off at a community college to save money and transfer to a four-year university or college.
Apprenticeship/ on-the-job-training	Carpenter, plumber, machinist, construction worker, dog trainer	On-the-job experience or apprenticeship program at a job site
Professional degree: earned to work in a specific profession. Medical Doctor (MD), Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS), and Juris Doctor (JD) are three common examples.	Lawyer, doctor, veterinarian, dentist, orthodontist, pharmacist	Professional school (e.g., law school, medical school, dental school) after completing a bachelor's degree
Military service: enlisted personnel join following high school. The GI Bill is educational assistance.	Information systems technician, machinist, welder, dental laboratory technician, power plant operator	Air Force, Army, Navy, Marines, National Guard, & Coast Guard

*Note that some individuals performing these jobs may have different credentials. The examples here are generalizations.

Online Resources

Career Videos, Informational Videos, and My Future VT



"VSAC Shows You How" videos:

- ❖ Career Options
 - ❖ The College Application Process
 - ❖ EMC² Essential Math for College and Careers
 - ❖ Plan for College Costs
 - ❖ Financial Aid Options
 - ❖ Grants
 - ❖ Scholarships
 - ❖ Adult Learners Return to Learning
 - ❖ Save for College 529 Plan
- www.vsac.org/vermont-career-connect**



Find over 100 career videos with real Vermonters in the field. Career Clusters:

- ❖ Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
 - ❖ Architecture and Construction
 - ❖ Arts, A/V Technology, and Communications
 - ❖ Business, Management, and Administration
 - ❖ Education and Training
 - ❖ Finance
 - ❖ Government and Public Administration
 - ❖ Health Science
 - ❖ Hospitality and Tourism
 - ❖ Human Services
 - ❖ IT Information Technology
 - ❖ Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security
 - ❖ Manufacturing
 - ❖ Marketing, Sales, and Service
 - ❖ Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
 - ❖ Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics
- <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiN4z5A6QS7cya9BHxz3rPg>**



My Future VT: Your Path Your Future a free online resource to help you take the next step in your education and career journey. Find out more at: **www.MyFutureVT.org**



Other sites you've found (keep some of your own notes here):

College Costs



College is expensive, but financial aid, scholarships, and planning ahead can help. Some students attend a community college first and then transfer to a four-year university to finish their bachelor's degree because it can be less expensive. Community College of Vermont costs close to \$7,000 per year, but a public Vermont university can cost up to \$30,000 per year if your child lives on campus. The investment is something to prepare for and discuss as a family. Many students earn scholarships and qualify for financial aid which reduces the out of pocket costs. GEAR UP students receive a renewable (for four years while in college) scholarship. Your Outreach Counselor can help you find information and resources about financial supports and opportunities.

Decisions about the Financial Investment

- 1. Learn about financial aid.** Need-based aid takes into account your family's financial ability to pay for college. Merit-based aid looks at your student's grades, talents, leadership experience, etc. Federal and state grants and scholarships are considered "gift aid"; no repayment is required. Student loans do require repayment. Applications for federal and state aid and for many scholarships open up in October. See below for information about the FAFSA and Vermont Grant application. Many colleges offer payment plans to ease the financial burden. The federal government offers student and parent loans, and applications for private loans are available through VSAC and other lenders. With these resources, students and families rarely pay "the sticker price."
- 2. Visit financial aid offices.** Once your child narrows their college search, request a meeting with a financial aid counselor at each college to discuss the colleges' financial aid opportunities available for your child. In-person meetings work best, but a phone call helps, too.
- 3. Submit a FAFSA.** Fill out a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) in the fall of your child's senior year. Your college uses your FAFSA data to determine your federal aid eligibility. Many states and colleges use FAFSA data to award their own aid. Visit www.fafsa.ed.gov.
- 4. Explore all options.** Find out if your workplace offers scholarships for employees' children.
- 5. Find more money.** Encourage your child to regularly set aside time to use free scholarship search engines such as www.FastWeb.com, www.cappex.com, www.Scholarships.com, and www.niche.com/colleges/scholarships. Offer to help them with applications if needed (proofread essays, etc.).
- 6. Consider opening a student savings account.** Encourage your child to work part-time and during the summers throughout high school. Visit your local bank and open a savings account in their name. In addition to saving money from their part-time job, they can add monetary gifts from family and friends.
- 7. Learn about NEBHE** (New England Board of Higher Education) options. Students from New England may be eligible for tuition breaks. Find out here: <https://nebhe.org/tuitionbreak/>
- 8. Save smart.** Savings like the Vermont Family College Savings (529) Program can offer tax-free growth and distributions if used for qualifying expenses. Visit www.vheip.org for more information.
- 9. VSAC Financial resources** can be found at www.vsac.org/pay including the Vermont State Grant.
- 10. Be persistent.** Explore all organizations that might offer scholarships including, churches and civic organizations.

While it's important that the family prepare financially for college (by saving and staying informed on financial aid opportunities), you don't have to pay for college all by yourself. The US Department of Education has more than \$120 billion in financial aid for students who qualify.

Vermont's post-secondary Institutions

Public Colleges and Universities

Vermont State University:

www.vermontstate.edu

Campuses:

Castleton
Johnson
Lyndon
Randolph
Williston

Community College of Vermont

www.ccv.edu

University of Vermont

www.uvm.edu

Some Private Colleges in and close to Vermont

Vermont

Bennington College
www.bennington.edu

Champlain College
www.champlain.edu

Landmark College
www.landmark.edu

Marlboro Institute for Liberal
Arts &
Interdisciplinary Study
www.marlboro.emerson.edu

Middlebury College
www.middlebury.edu

Norwich University
www.norwich.edu

St. Michael's College
www.smcvt.edu

Sterling College
www.sterlingcollege.edu

Goddard College
www.goddard.edu

New Hampshire

Colby-Sawyer College
www.colby-sawyer.edu

Dartmouth College
www.dartmouth.edu

New England College
www.nec.edu

Southern New Hampshire
University
www.snhu.edu

Maine

Colby College
www.colby.edu

The University of New England
www.une.edu

Thomas College
www.thomas.edu

New York

Paul Smith's College
www.paulsmiths.edu

Find more information about these institutions and other post-secondary programs go to: <https://education.vermont.gov/vermont-schools/school-operations/post-secondary-programs>



College & Career Readiness Checklist:

It's a lot of information to digest, so to help you keep track, we've provided a checklist. Keep an open mind about what your child wants to pursue after high school.

8th Grade:

- ☐ Discuss life after high school with your child and explore post-secondary options (college, skilled trades, military, workforce).
- ☐ Encourage your child to explore interests and careers. Learn about necessary credentials.
- ☐ Keep in touch with your child's teachers and school counselors.
- ☐ Encourage good study habits at home and make sure your child completes homework on time.
- ☐ Encourage your child to take challenging classes, which will help with college preparation,
- ☐ If you haven't already, start saving money for college. 529 Savings Plans offer tax benefits. Even a small amount (\$10) per month or paycheck can help.
- ☐ Work on the Education and Career Plan.
- ☐ Listen to learn about your child's interests, skills, and life goals.
- ☐ Begin conversations about summer opportunities such as at GIV, MedQuest, and community service. Ask your VSAC Counselor.

9th Grade:

- ☐ If your child didn't complete an Education and Career Plan in 8th grade, they should consider completing one. Meet with your child's school counselor to discuss progress.
- ☐ Encourage your student to take college-prep classes. Vermont universities require 4 credits each in math and English, 3 in science, 2 each in social studies and foreign language, and 1 in fine arts.
- ☐ Encourage and expect good grades, attendance, and on-time homework.
- ☐ Take opportunities to have your child visit colleges and training programs with GEAR UP and their school - or take them to visit!
- ☐ Urge your child to keep examples of great work in one place. These samples will help when your child prepares for college applications, essays, scholarships, and when they build a resume.
- ☐ Check out virtual college visits online, and ask high school counselors about college-visit opportunities.
- ☐ Encourage your child to get involved in extracurricular activities, which build valuable experience outside the classroom.
- ☐ Continue to save for post-secondary education.
- ☐ Listen to learn about your child's interests, skills, and life goals

10th Grade:

- ☐ Check in with teachers and school counselors to make sure your child stays on track for post-secondary success. Using the Education and Career Plan document can help.
- ☐ Plan for summer. Many colleges offer high school camps to experience college life. Check in with your child's school counselor about programs.
- ☐ Encourage your child to volunteer or get a summer internship to explore different careers.
- ☐ Keep saving best-work examples and continue to save money for college.
- ☐ Request college and training brochures that interest your child. Review together.
- ☐ Listen to learn about your child's interests, skills, and life goals.
- ☐ Explore the options of a technical education or certificate and professional programs.

College and Career Readiness Checklist (cont.):

11th Grade:

- ☐ Revisit the education and career plan with your counselor to make adjustments or stay on track.
- ☐ Encourage your child to enroll in college courses while in high school (courses are often free). Consider dual enrollment, Early College, Advanced Placement (AP), or International Baccalaureate programs.
- ☐ Ask your counselor about the Fast Forward Dual Enrollment courses at Tech Centers
- ☐ Sign your child up for the PSAT in the fall. High scores may yield college scholarships.
- ☐ Check-in with your child's teachers to make sure they're on track with schoolwork.
- ☐ Encourage your child to register for the ACT or SAT in the spring. Some schools even waive the registration fee.
- ☐ Go to <https://studentaid.gov/aid-estimator/> to find out how much federal student aid your child may qualify for.
- ☐ Encourage your child to seek and apply for scholarships.
- ☐ If your child isn't on track to graduate, talk to a school counselor about credit recovery options.
- ☐ When possible, a summer job/internship is a great opportunity to explore careers and save for college.
- ☐ Go to <https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/> to find out more about college affordability and value.
- ☐ Continue to save examples of your child's work.
- ☐ Listen to learn about your child's interests, skills, and life goals
- ☐ Seek out summer college programs/camps and encourage your child to participate.

12th Grade:

- ☐ Guard against Senior-itis! Good grades and rigorous courses play a big factor in college scholarships and post-secondary success.
- ☐ Discuss high school and post-secondary plan progress with your child's school counselor and VSAC counselor.
- ☐ Continue to encourage dual enrollment, AP, or International Baccalaureate programs.
- ☐ Make sure your child applies to colleges in the fall, and plan a visit to at least one campus.
- ☐ Make sure your child completes the FAFSA in the fall at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Apply for the Vermont State Grant. Just applying increases following a plan after high school.
- ☐ Encourage your child to seek & apply for scholarships. It's worth the time!
- ☐ Get a head start on college admission essays. Have your counselor proofread!
- ☐ Know the deadlines for applications, scholarships, and financial aid.
- registers for orientation, placement exams, and
- ☐ After college acceptance, ensure your child completes FAFSA verifications.
- ☐ Continue to save money for college.
- ☐ Listen to learn about your child's interests, skills, and life goals.

Follow the QR code for a more detailed month by month list for Seniors at:



It's always helpful to take a variety of career interest surveys over a few years to see interests and shifts in interests and skills. Follow the QR code for an example:

Education & Career Plan

Check in with your child(ren) often about their interests and be observant in what they like to do and where their strengths lie.

Student Name: _____ School: _____ Grade Level: _____

Section 1: Explore Interests, Passions, Abilities, and Influences

The top three interests that spark curiosity and inspire me to learn more:

Three of my passions are:

I'm good at all sorts of things, but I can imagine using the skills and abilities below most frequently in my career:

Considering family, community and cultural values is important to me. (Circle one) Yes No

Section 2: This Is Where I Want to Go

Based on my explorations so far, the following career cluster seems like the best fit:

The three specific careers in that cluster that interest me the most:

Section 3 – Academic Preparation

In-School (Curricular)

My grades from my most recent report cards:

English _____ Math _____ Reading _____ Science _____

Looking at my grades, I need to improve:

English _____ Math _____ Reading _____ Science _____

During high school, besides Math, Science, English, and Social Studies, I may need to take these courses for my ideal career:

Outside of School (Extracurricular)

After-school activities or organizations in my community that would be fun to explore and could help me develop job skills:

Section 3 – This Is How I Will Get There

The credential I need for my ideal career/occupation is:

_____ Certificate _____ Associate Degree _____ Bachelor's Degree _____ Professional Degree _____ License

The pathway through which I can get this credential (check one or more):

_____ University _____ Community College _____ Apprenticeship _____ Technical Institute _____ Military

List one to three experiences you can seek out, beyond education, to help you prepare for college and career:

VSAC Outreach
Personal Learning Plan
 Contact info (email/cell):

Name:

School:

Class of:

OC:

GEAR UP Required Subject Areas	Grade 9 (# of credits)	Grade 10 (# of credits)	Grade 11 (# of credits)	Grade 12 (# of credits)
Math Minimum through Algebra 2				
Science Minimum of 3 2 lab sciences				
Social Studies Minimum of 3 Years				
Foreign Language Minimum of 2 years in same language				
English 4 years college prep				
Physical Education Minimum of 1.5 years				
Electives				
Total credits				

Notes:



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A federally funded program

Vermont GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) is a program of Vermont Student Assistance Corporation, made possible by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Through partnerships with school districts and others, VSAC GEAR UP is significantly increasing the number of students from who stay in school and are prepared to enter and succeed in post-secondary education or pursue their career upon graduation. Learn more at www.vvac.org/gearup.

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