

## Freshman Year: Preparing for College and Career

The beginning of high school is an exciting time. You may be adjusting to a new school, making new friends and becoming more independent. But taking time to start preparing for your future is extremely important! Here are some things you can do freshman year:

- Show your student how to explore career ideas. She can make a list of interests, talents and favorite activities and start matching them with occupations.
  - **CollegeMajors101** is a great website for exploring careers. Here is the web address for **CollegeMajors101**: <http://www.collegemajors101.com/>
  - Another resources for exploring careers is **O\*NET Online**: [www.onetonline.org/](http://www.onetonline.org/)
- Help your student set goals for the school year. What grades is she going to work towards in each of her classes? Working toward specific goals helps students stay motivated and focused.
- Make a plan to check in regularly about schoolwork. If you keep up with your child's tests, papers and homework assignments, you can celebrate successes and head off problems as a team.
- Talk about extracurricular activities. Getting involved in clubs and other groups is a great way for your child to identify interests and feel more engaged in school.
- Around January, begin to discuss next year's classes. Make sure you are challenging yourself, but most importantly take the courses that are the best fit for you! (Talking to your teachers about courses they recommend is extremely important.)
- Spring—Sit down with your student and talk about her college or career goals. If she has some career goals or ambitions, do a search on the Internet for some colleges that have this major. Start making a list of colleges your student might be interested in and that might have the academic program she is interested in.
- Make use of Spring Break and Summer vacation time...visiting college campus' is a great way to get students thinking about what they are looking for in a school.
- Help your child make summer plans. Summer is a great time to explore interests and learn new skills — and colleges look for students who pursue meaningful summer activities.