

CONVERSATION STARTERS AND TIPS: ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



“What Do You Want to Be When You Grow Up?”

- Actively listen to and question your mentee about their future; share your thought process concerning a desirable occupational career and picking a college.
- Encourage them to think about possible career paths. If they express no specific interest, ask them about what they like to do or what someone they admire does for a living. (Remember not to discourage them from or talk negatively about any profession).
 - Check out the “Explore Possible Careers” information in the Additional Resources section to help you and your mentee think about the intersections between personal interests, career paths, courses, and required education.
- Help them research what their particular profession/occupation of interest requires; the goal is to help your mentee become aware of and take college preparatory courses.



Talk About Where You Went To College

If you attended college, or are familiar with a local institution, make sure to talk about it! Fill out “Talking Points about Your College” in the Additional Resources section.



Discuss College Life

Review college newspapers, admission guides, brochures, etc. with your mentee and discuss college life, activities, and admission processes.



Extracurricular Encouragement

Encourage your mentee to participate in extracurricular activities starting in elementary school; such as sports, community service, and other leadership opportunities. Attend one of those activities to see and support your mentee’s participation.



College-Bound Behaviors

Explain to your mentee how they should begin developing the good habits and self-discipline they will need to be successful in elementary school, middle school, high school, and college. This could include improving grades, study and homework habits, school attendance, test-taking skills, and time management. Talk with your mentee about these college-bound behaviors.



The Importance of Adults

Encourage your mentee to talk to their counselors, parent(s), and the other important adults in their lives about getting post-secondary education after high school. This could include 4-year colleges or universities, 2-year community or junior colleges, or vocational/technical school.