

6TH Grade

ONTRACK
YOUR GUIDE TO HIGH SCHOOL SUCCESS

*Find Out What You
Will Learn This Year*

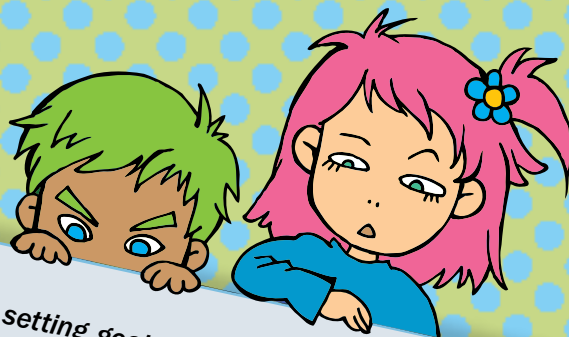
**7 QUICK Tips^{TO}
SUCCEED
IN 6TH GRADE**

*You're Invited to a
Career Party*

A partnership of the **Indiana Department of Education** and
Indiana Commission for Higher Education



Hey, 6th grader!



Sixth grade is a great time to start thinking about setting goals for your future. What do you like to do? What do you want to be? What will you do after high school? Relax — you don't have to make any big decisions yet. But making your dreams happen requires a solid academic foundation, which starts with Indiana's Academic Standards. Academic standards outline the knowledge and skills you need at each grade level to make sure you graduate high school prepared for college, careers and citizenship. Tests like ISTEP+ provide a checkup along the way to make sure you're on track and signal if you're ready for more advanced work or need extra help. See page 4 for a sneak peek at the standards for 6th grade. Although college and planning for the future are things you need to do right now. OnTrack: 6th Grade has some quick tips and information to help you succeed in 6th grade. Education plays a big part in making your dreams happen — so check out the tips inside OnTrack: 6th Grade and share them with your family.

Have a great year!

Mitch Daniels

Mitch Daniels
Governor
State of Indiana

Dr. Suellen Reed

Dr. Suellen Reed
Superintendent of Public Instruction
Indiana Department of Education

Stan Jones

Stan Jones
Commissioner
Indiana Commission for Higher Education

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7 tips for School Success

Here are seven easy ways to help you do well in school!

1 GO TO SCHOOL

It sounds obvious, but you might be surprised at how many students fail to take attendance seriously, which can cause big problems. A solid attendance record is important because you'll get better grades and learn more if you actually attend school — period. You can't learn if you're not there. Get in the habit of taking school attendance seriously.

In middle and high school, you will need to follow your school's attendance policy and limit the number of absences. Too many absences might mean you won't earn enough credits to graduate.

If you must be absent for any reason, take the necessary steps to get the absence excused and make sure you contact your teachers or someone in each of your classes to find out what was covered. Then, be sure to get the homework you've missed completed and turned in.

2 GET ORGANIZED

The first step toward organization is having the right equipment. It doesn't have to be fancy; a different color folder (neatly labeled) for each class and a calendar or planner should do it.

In the folders, keep notes in one pocket and handouts in the other. In your calendar or planner, create a schedule to keep track of all your major assignments and tests. Take time to plan your weekly schedule including homework, activities, work and time with friends. Then try to stick to the plan.

3 DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Sounds like a no-brainer, right? Wrong. Some students blow off homework by either not doing it at all or not putting enough effort into it. If you blow it off, your grades will suffer.

There are two schools of thought on homework: Complete the easiest tasks first to give yourself a boost of energy and confidence, or complete the hardest and longest assignment first to get it out of the way. Try both methods to see which one works better for you.

Whichever you choose, make sure you give yourself a little downtime or reward between tasks to give your brain a break.

4 DON'T WAIT TO GET HELP

If you're worried about your grades or test scores, ask for help right away. Whether you're struggling with homework or aren't doing well on quizzes, ask your teacher or school counselor for specific ways to improve. Speak up if you think you're falling behind, and be sure to take advantage of the extra help sessions, study tables or tutoring your school may provide.

5 WORK HARD

Do more than just get by. For example, if your teacher offers you extra credit, take the opportunity — even if you don't need it to make the grade. Grades matter, but it's more important to stretch yourself. Students who go the extra mile will have more job opportunities and more college choices.

6 PLAY SMART

Get plenty of sleep. Choose water over soda. Limit the number of sweets you eat. Exercise, either by practicing or playing your favorite sport or by taking a walk instead of watching TV or playing computer games. Speaking of which, try to save most of your TV watching and computer games for the weekend. In addition, some of your friends may offer you cigarettes, alcohol or drugs — just stay away. Nothing good comes from doing illegal things that are bad for your body.

7 READ FOR FUN

Spend some time reading outside of class — books, online news, magazines, whatever appeals to you. Reading for fun gives you a chance to learn about new things, which will help you do better in school. It also can improve your scores on standardized tests like the ACT or SAT and help you explore your interests.



What You Need To Know in 6th Grade

Sixth grade is an exciting time. Want a sneak peek at what you're going to be learning this year?

You're in luck: Indiana's Academic Standards spell out what you're supposed to know and be able to do by the end of 6th grade. And since our state has the best standards in the country, expect a world-class education. Check out the "big picture" below.

INDIANA'S ACADEMIC STANDARDS

ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS

■ Vocabulary and Concept Development

Use knowledge of word and context clues to determine the meaning of words in informational and literary texts. Compare and contrast the meanings of closely related words.

■ Informational Text: Structure, Comprehension and Analysis

Compare and use the organization and structural features of different types of informational text, including media and online sources. Identify main points and supporting evidence in outlines, summaries and reports that follow a clear organizational pattern.

■ Literary Text: Comprehension and Analysis

Analyze how word choice and figurative language create tone and meaning in literary texts using evidence from the text to support conclusions. Describe types and purposes of literary devices, find examples of each in texts and interpret them within their contexts.

■ Writing: Informational, Research and Persuasive Texts

Use a variety of strategies to develop ideas for topic sentences for research and determine the purpose, audience and appropriate organization for each piece of writing. Use reading and note-taking skills to find and summarize relevant information from sources to be interpreted and/or cited. Include a topic sentence and multiple paragraphs with supporting evidence leading to logical conclusions. Revise writing, improving clarity and organization. Edit writing, correctly crediting all ideas and wording from sources.

■ Writing: Literary Text

Use graphic organizers and a list or notebook of ideas to plan writing. Choose a literary form (e.g., story, poem) that best suits the purpose. Include a developed plot or main idea, sensory details, varied word choices, and character development.

Revise writing for clarity, organization and meaning. Proofread and edit writing.

■ English Language Conventions

Write sentences that show clear relationships between main and supporting ideas. Check and edit parts of sentences for correct subject-verb agreement with indefinite pronouns (e.g., each, all).

■ Listening and Speaking

Deliver oral presentations that are logically organized, provide context and relevant details, and include strategies, including visual and media displays, to engage listeners. Identify persuasive techniques used within speeches and presentations. Analyze how these techniques, along with language choices and physical cues, affect the tone and meaning of a presentation.

MATH

■ Positive and Negative Numbers

Understand and apply the concept of positive and negative numbers. Add, subtract, multiply and divide positive and negative integers. Represent negative numbers, and computation with negative numbers, on a number line.

■ Percent Representations

Use percents to represent parts of a whole. Represent numbers as fractions, decimals and percents.

■ Multiplication and Division of Fractions and Decimals

Understand and perform multiplication and division with positive decimals and fractions.

■ Ratio and Rate

Solve simple ratio and rate problems using multiplication and division.

■ Angles and Polygons

Use properties of complementary, supplementary and vertical angles and properties of triangles and quadrilaterals to find missing angles.

■ Shapes and Solids

Find and use the circumference and area of circles and the surface area of right prisms and cylinders.

■ Linear Equations

Write and solve one-step equations and inequalities in one variable.

■ Linear Functions

Write equations of linear functions representing a given situation and graph the resulting ordered pairs of integers on a coordinate grid.

SCIENCE

■ Hypotheses

Formulate a hypothesis that can lead to an investigation. Examine different ways in which scientists investigate their hypotheses and draw conclusions from their data.

■ Limits

Describe how technology is used for transportation, data collection and analysis, and communication. Give examples of problems that are not solved by technology.

Physical Science

■ Properties of Matter

Explain that all matter is composed of atoms and describe the basic composition and characteristics of an atom. Explain that all forms of matter are composed of one or more of approximately 100 elements and give examples of specific elements.

■ Energy

Compare and contrast the two different types of mechanical energy: potential and kinetic. Identify the three common forms of potential energy: gravitational, chemical and elastic.

Earth and Space Science

■ Earth Systems

1. Explain how the sun's gravitational pull keeps objects in our solar system in regular and predictable



motion. Use models to demonstrate how Earth's gravity pulls all objects near Earth toward the center of Earth. Create models of the major bodies in our solar system, showing their relative sizes and their relative distances from the sun. **2.** Describe with models or drawings how Earth's tilt on its axis relative to the plane of Earth's yearly orbit around the sun is responsible for seasonal weather changes. Explain how global patterns of air movement are caused by differential heating of air, land and oceans and how these patterns affect weather and climate patterns.

Earth and Space Systems

■ **Earth Structures**

Explain and give examples of the ways in which soil is formed. Compare and contrast the compositions and textures of the layers of different soils. Explain how the metabolic processes of bacteria and fungi affect soil and how the behaviors of larger organisms, including humans, affect soil composition and fertility.

Life Science

■ **Structures and Functions of Living Systems**

1. Describe specific interactions (e.g., predator/prey, producer/consumer, parasite/host) between organisms and categorize the effects on the organisms as beneficial, harmful, neither or both. Explain how dead plants and animals are broken down by scavengers and decomposers and how this process contributes to the system as a whole. **2.** Describe how energy from the sun is transformed by plants into sugar and transferred within a food chain from producers to consumers and decomposers. Trace the one-way path energy takes through producers, consumers and decomposers. Compare and contrast organisms at each level of a food chain with regard to how they obtain and use energy. Describe the criteria by which organisms are classified and how their identifying characteristics are related to their role in the food chain.

SOCIAL STUDIES

History

■ **Early Civilizations and Societies in Europe and the Americas to 700 A.D/C.E.**

Describe the cultural achievements, governing systems, religious beliefs, influences and interactions of different ancient civilizations in Europe, Mesoamerica and the Eastern Roman Empire.

■ **Medieval History Period and the Renaissance to the 16th Century**

Describe the feudal system and explain the influence of religion on medieval society. Describe the developments in science, the arts and literature that occurred during the European Renaissance.

■ **Exploration, Colonization and Post-Colonialism to the 19th Century**

Explain the outcomes of European colonization on the Americas. Describe the impact of the Age of Enlightenment on political, economic and scientific thought in Europe and the Americas.

■ **Europe and the Americas in the 19th to the 21st Century**

Describe the impact of industrialization on the lives of individuals, nations and relations between countries of Europe and the Americas. Explain the influence of competing political and social ideologies on the governments of Europe and the Americas. Describe the effect of independence movements in Eastern Europe.

■ **Chronology, Analysis and Interpretation**

Identify people and events in history by comparing and creating timelines. Analyze cause and effect in historical events, differentiate between fact and interpretation, and explain the meaning of historical passages. Analyze historical events.

Civics and Government

■ **Foundations of Government in Europe and the Americas**

Compare the early Greek and Roman forms of representative government. Identify early nation states headed by monarchs. Describe the impact Enlightenment ideas had on government.

■ **Functions of Government in Europe and the Americas**

Describe and give examples of socialist, communist and democratic governments in Europe and the Americas and compare the roles of citizens in these governments. Identify international organizations and describe their functions.

Geography

■ **Maps and Globes**

Identify countries and use latitude and longitude to locate capital cities. Locate major mountain regions, bodies of water, deserts and climate regions of Europe and the Americas.

■ **Human and Physical Systems**

Describe the distribution of natural resources, people, languages and major religions in Europe and the Americas. Explain how cultures change.

Economics

■ **International Trade**

Explain how trade has affected the history and development of countries in Europe and the Americas. Identify Indiana's global, economic connections.

■ **Standard of Living**

Compare the standards of living of countries in Europe and the Americas using a variety of data, including gross domestic product. Describe the method of channeling funds from savers, borrowers and investors.

ISTEP+

A checkup on what you know

In Indiana, students in grades 3 through 10 take the Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress Plus (ISTEP+).

ISTEP+ is important. It is based on Indiana's Academic Standards, which outline the knowledge and skills you need at each grade level to make sure you graduate from high school prepared for college, careers and the rest of your future. (To find out more about the grade 6 standards and get a sneak peek at what you'll be learning this year, check out pages 4 and 5.)

Tests like ISTEP+ provide a checkup along the way to make sure you are on track and signal if you are ready for more advanced work or need extra help.

This year only, you will take ISTEP+ in the fall and spring. This is because Indiana is changing the test to give better information about how well you are doing to your teachers, your parents and you. After this year, you will take the test only in the spring.

The fall test includes questions on English/language arts and mathematics.

The new version of the test, given in the spring, will also include questions on English/language arts and mathematics at each grade, as well as science at grade 6 and social studies at grade 7.

The spring test has two parts:

- ✓ In March, you will take part one, which includes essays and other questions that will ask you to write a response.
- ✓ In late April or early May, you will take part two, which includes multiple-choice questions.

Remember, the best way to prepare for ISTEP+ is to try your best every day.

**6TH
GRADE**

2008-2009 ISTEP+ at a Glance

Testing date	Subjects	Types of questions
Fall September	English/language arts Math	Multiple choice, essay and short answer
Spring March	English/language arts Math Science	Essay and short answer
Spring Late April or early May	English/language arts Math Science	Multiple choice

After this year, you will take ISTEP+ only in the spring.

Get ready for the GQE

ISTEP+ is just one in a series of tests that you will take while you are in school. As part of Indiana's high school diploma requirements, you will need to pass Indiana's Graduation Qualifying Exam (GQE).

Starting this year, Indiana is changing the GQE. Now, instead of one big test you take for the first time in 10th grade, the new GQE includes two smaller tests you will take after completing courses in Algebra I and English 10.

Some students take Algebra I in 8th grade or even earlier, so you may take that part of the GQE this year. To find out more, contact your school counselor.

Tips to help you do your best on test day

Be prepared

Cramming for any test is never the best way to prepare. Keep up with your homework, complete assignments and ask your teacher for help when you need it.

Review

ISTEP+ checks what you should be learning. Your teacher may do some reviewing during class in the weeks before you take ISTEP+. Take it seriously.

Get plenty of sleep

Go to bed a little earlier so you get a good night's sleep. Being well rested will give you an extra boost of energy for test day.

Have a good breakfast

Protein such as eggs, meat, cheese or yogurt will help you perform better than a sugary doughnut. Too much food can make you feel sleepy, so don't overdo it.

Take a break

When you get the chance, get up and walk around. Too much sitting can make you restless during the test.

Ask for help

If you've had trouble with the ISTEP+ in the past, ask a teacher, counselor or parent for help right now. Passing ISTEP+ is important every year. Your school and community have extra help available. Be sure to take advantage of it.

or
any
day

To find out more about ISTEP+, go to
www.learnmoreindiana.org/istep.

ISTEP+ SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Building a Railroad

During the 1850s, many people believed that a railroad could not be built across the United States. They said the western mountains and deserts could not be crossed. Theodore Judah, an experienced railroad builder in the East, was sure that the job could be done. Judah began the job of laying the Central Pacific Railroad tracks eastward from California. Somewhere in the middle of the country, the tracks would be joined with those of the Union Pacific Railroad, which had been laid from the East.

Many difficulties faced Judah. In the Sierra Nevada Mountains, sharp cliffs dropped into steep canyons. Workers were lowered in baskets over these cliffs. They swung hammers against the cliffs to carve paths into the sides of the mountains. These paths were then widened enough to lay railroad tracks.

When winter came, the wind piled snow into drifts fifty feet high. Wooden snow sheds were built to protect the workers and the tracks. Even so, some workers were freezing and had to be sent down to Sacramento.

The slowest work was digging Summit Tunnel. Day and night for a whole year, hammers and chisels bit into the rock — often removing as little as two inches of rock a day. It was the most expensive quarter of a mile of railroad track in history.

After the mountains were crossed, the workers faced the desert heat of the Great Basin. Even with all the difficulties, the Central Pacific Railroad joined the Union Pacific in Utah in 1869. Theodore Judah died before the railroad was completed, but he and many brave people had proved that it could be done.

*FIRST,
read
this story.*

*THEN,
answer these
questions.*

- 1 Read this sentence from “Building a Railroad”: Day and night for a whole year, hammers and chisels bit into the rock — often removing as little as two inches of rock a day.

Which word is the same as, or a synonym for, *bit*?

- ☐ ate ☐ flew
☐ gripped ☐ cut

- 2 According to the article, what are TWO MAIN difficulties that Theodore Judah and the workers faced while building the railroad?

- 3 This passage is an example of what kind of writing?

- ☐ a tall tale ☐ a folktale
☐ an autobiography ☐ a piece of nonfiction

4 Prompt: CAREER DAY SPEAKER

Your school's Career Day will welcome guest speakers who will talk about their jobs. What kind of work interests you?

Write an essay in which you suggest a speaker for Career Day.

On a separate piece of paper, describe the job and give reasons why learning about that job would be beneficial for you and your classmates.

- 5 Find the value of $6y + 13$ when $y = 7$.

- ☐ 19 ☐ 26
☐ 55 ☐ 80

- 6 Darla wants to buy a CD player and some CDs. She can spend \$70.00. The CD player she wants is \$39.95. CDs cost between \$8.00 and \$12.00 each. On the lines below explain how Darla could estimate whether she could pay for the cost of the CD player and 4 CDs before tax.

- 7 How many degrees are in $\frac{1}{4}$ of a full turn?

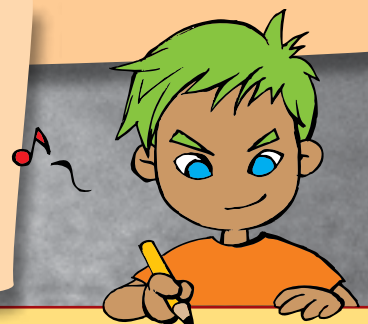
- ☐ 90°
☐ 180°
☐ 270°
☐ 360°

- 8 Stephanie bought a sweater that originally cost \$71.28. It was discounted by \$12.50. How much will the discounted sweater cost before tax?

- ☐ \$58.78 ☐ \$61.22
☐ \$69.78 ☐ \$83.78

- 9 Which of the following list of numbers is in order from LEAST to GREATEST?

- ☐ 0.5, 2.15, 2.25, 1.75
☐ 0.5, 1.75, 2.15, 2.25
☐ 2.25, 2.15, 1.75, .5
☐ 1.75, .5, 2.25, 2.15



Answers

1. cut 2. Possible answers: In the winter, wind piled snow into fifty-foot drifts. Some of the workers were too cold to work and had to be sent to Sacramento. The mountains had sharp cliffs and steep canyons so it was dangerous for the workers. Digging Summit Tunnel was difficult because workers had to remove the rock with hammers and chisels. 3. a piece of nonfiction 4. Answers will vary and will be scored using the ISTEP+ rubrics for writing applications and language conventions. 5. 55 6. Darla spends about \$40 on the CD player. CDs cost between \$8 and \$12, which is about \$10 each. Four CDs would be about \$40. Adding \$40 for the CD player plus another \$40 for the CDs is \$80. Darla does not have enough money to buy the CD player she wants and four CDs. 7. 90 8. \$58.78 9. 0.5, 1.75, 2.15, 2.25

YOUR FUTURE STARTS NOW

EVER WONDER WHAT IT WILL BE LIKE IN MIDDLE SCHOOL, HIGH SCHOOL OR COLLEGE? EVER DREAM ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP? HERE ARE SOME IDEAS TO HELP YOU PLAN YOUR FUTURE.

Middle School

Whenever you begin middle school, you'll discover that teachers and parents will have big expectations of you. You should expect more homework — and your homework will count toward your grade more than ever. Regular tests and quizzes will help you and your teachers keep track of your progress. You may get some choices about a few of the classes you take. If you can, try to get ahead by taking Algebra I or a world language like Japanese, French or Spanish. Remember to talk to your parents and school counselor about all available options. You'll probably have some choices about extracurricular activities, too. It's a great time to try something new!



College

Colleges come in all sizes and types. You'll need to do some research to find the best one for you. The important thing to know is that Indiana's seven public universities operate 40 campuses across the state, and there are more than 30 independent colleges in Indiana as well. Plus, apprenticeship programs and the military can lead to great careers. In other words, you have a lot of options. When you get to college, you can prepare for the career you want. College gives you independence and a great start for life.



High School

High school presents more options. In Indiana, Core 40 is your academic plan.

Core 40 is a solid set of high school courses in the core subjects of English/ language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. You'll also take courses in physical education and health as well as electives including world languages, career/technical training and fine arts. Core 40 comes with some pretty cool rewards, like paying for up to 90 percent of approved tuition and fees at eligible colleges for those who qualify financially and graduate high school with at least a 2.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale.

High school also provides great opportunities to get involved: join a club, play a sport, get a summer job, volunteer for a cause or explore a fine art. All of these options will help you grow as a person, develop your talents and prepare you for future scholarship applications.



Careers

The best careers require you to continue your education after high school. Some require just a few months of training; most require you to complete a college degree.

You can learn about careers at www.learnmoreindiana.org or by checking out library books about careers, talking with your parents and their friends about their jobs, and doing volunteer work in your community.

You also can find out which skills and what level of education you need for different kinds of jobs through the *Indiana Career Guide: Skill Pathways for Your Future*, available at www.learnmoreindiana.org/skillpathways.

Hoosier Hot 50 Jobs (www.learnmoreindiana.org/hoosierhotjobs) lists the top 50 good-paying jobs that will have the most openings in Indiana in the future.

Right now is a good time to daydream. Think about your perfect life: What kind of job will you have? Where will you live? What will you have to do to reach your goal?

Most people change jobs and careers several times during their lifetimes. The important thing is to get a good education now, so you'll be prepared for whatever you choose to do in the future.



GET STARTED THINKING ABOUT YOUR FUTURE.

You're
invited
to a

Career Party

Lucky you! You're invited to a party at a friend's house this weekend. When you arrive, you see lots of your classmates. They all seem to be talking in small groups about different topics. As you walk around the room, listen to each group to see which one you want to join:

GROUP 1

Your friends in this group are talking about everything from sports to raising animals to fixing cars. Everyone in the group enjoys being outdoors and working with their hands, fixing and tinkering with things.

GROUP 2

Everyone in this group is interested in watching, investigating, analyzing or solving problems. Some say they like science; others enjoy puzzles and computer games. They're definitely good at finding answers.

GROUP 3

This group of your friends is very creative. Some like to draw and paint; others enjoy doing innovative or unusual things. All of them enjoy using their imagination and creativity in unstructured situations.

GROUP 4

At first you think this group is very loud, but then you realize they just all like to talk. Some of the students say they want to teach people what they know; others want to be on stage or in movies; others want to work with people in the medical field.

GROUP 5

Your friends in this group are "take charge" people who like to persuade others. They're definitely leaders; some are on the student council, and others say they want to own their own business or make a lot of money some day.

GROUP 6

Even though this group is quieter than the others, you can tell that these students like to talk about how they keep things ordered and organized. Most of your friends in this group like working with numbers and data ... and they're really good at it.

Which group do you decide to hang out with first? Write that group's number in the box on the right.

After 10 minutes, that group moves to the kitchen to get some snacks. So which group do you go to next? Write that group's number in the box on the right.

After 10 more minutes, you decide to chat with another group. Which one? Write that group's number in the box on the right.

Using the KEY below, write the first letter of each of the groups you chose in order here:

These three letters in this order form your unique career code.

Then go to www.learnmoreindiana.org. In the navigation bar, go to "Careers" and then to "Exploring Careers." Select the link for "Career Profiles." Then click on "Advanced Search." Where it says "RIASEC," use the dropdown menu to select your career code. Then click "Get Careers" to see information on careers that might interest you.

GROUP #	
GROUP #	
GROUP #	

Group 1=Realistic Group

Group 2=Investigative Group

Group 3=Artistic Group

Group 4=Social Group

Group 5=Enterprising Group

Group 6=Conventional Group

Adapted from *What Color is Your Parachute?*, Richard Bolles, Ten Speed Press, utilizing the Holland Code career theory.



TAKE A BYTE OUT OF THE INTERNET



The Internet is an amazing tool for school, socializing and mindless fun. But it's also a big, big cyberworld out there, full of ways to get in trouble. You have to be smart and streetwise to stay safe.

You've probably heard the stories about people who have gotten into serious trouble online, either because they are looking at Web sites they shouldn't or because they've met people online who persuaded them to do things that are wrong.

BE SMART:

Follow your parents' and school's rules about computer use (or risk losing your privileges).

Never give out personal information online. Don't ever reveal your name, home address, phone number, Social Security number, passwords, names of your family members, your parents' credit card numbers or the name of your school. It can happen accidentally — for example, a picture of you in a school shirt or at a school function could let someone know where you go to school — so be careful. And when in doubt, don't post it.

Make sure that your online identity (e-mail address or screen name) doesn't identify whether you are male or female. In chat rooms, use a name that is different from your e-mail address so that no one can contact you after you leave the chat room.

Remember that everything you post or text message can be saved forever. Only write online what you are willing to say in person — words can follow you around. Before posting something on the Internet, ask yourself if it is something you want your parents, grandparents, potential employers or colleges to see.

Keeping a journal is a great way to keep track of your thoughts and ideas. You should consider keeping your journal in a notebook rather than a computer blog. Anything you write or any pictures or videos you post on the Internet are available for all to see ... not just your friends.

For more information on Internet safety, visit www.safeteens.com.



7 Ways To Learn about Careers

In high school, take classes that will help you explore your interests and start to figure out what you want to do in life. Right now, you also can use these other tools:

- 1 Search Check out www.learnmoreindiana.org for career interest inventories and hundreds of career profiles to help you start figuring out what jobs might interest you.
- 2 Drive Drive of Your Life (www.driveofyourlife.org) is an online activity that lets you explore your career interests in a customizable car.
- 3 Shadow Job shadowing is a great way to see what a job is really like by spending the day with someone who works in a career that interests you. Even spending a day with one of your family members at work is a great start.
- 4 Join Clubs and organizations let you explore interests in new areas and develop leadership skills.
- 5 Perform The creative arts, which include music, acting and painting, teach creativity and self-expression — important skills companies desire in their workers.
- 6 Serve Community service or volunteer work can give you the opportunity to try out various career areas.
- 7 Experience more Indiana high schools offer elective courses that allow you to combine school and work — great ways to get a firsthand look at different careers.



TALK TO YOUR PARENTS

The best way to communicate with parents, or any adult, is to keep talking to them no matter what. Strong relationships really depend on keeping the lines of communication open.

Here are some ways to approach your parents (or any adult) with an important topic:

- **Plan what you want to say ahead of time.** Think over what you want to say in advance, and write down the two or three most important points you want to make.
- **Let them know directly that there's something you'd like to discuss.** To be sure you have their full attention, be direct in your language. Say, "There's something important I want to talk to you about," instead of, "Hey, when you have a moment I'd like to talk."

- **Pick a good time to talk.** Try to approach them at a time when you know they'll be less busy and more able to focus on you. You may even want to ask if they could talk at a particular time so that you know you'll have their attention.
- **Write it down first.** Some people find it easier to put their ideas into a letter. Let the other person read it and then have your discussion.
- **Disagree without disrespect.** Parents are only human, and they can feel offended when their views are challenged. Using respectful language and behavior is important. Resist the temptation to use sarcasm, yell or put down your parents, and you'll have a much better chance of finding a solution.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Your school counselor is one of your best resources as you plan for high school and for college. Take the first step, and make an appointment to discuss your plans.

The following are some basic questions that you might ask your counselor:

- ☐ What is a Graduation Plan?
- ☐ What is Core 40? Can I take more advanced courses?
- ☐ How should I use my electives?
- ☐ Where can I get extra help if I need it?
- ☐ What can I do to explore careers that interest me?
- ☐ What are the new careers in science, technology, engineering and math?

really!

Teachers Are People, Too

It may be hard to think of your teachers as real people. But given the chance, they can offer you the kind of advice and support that might change your life forever.

10 Tips for Parents

- 1 HAVE HIGH EXPECTATIONS.** It is important for your child to know that you value education. Make sure your student understands that you expect him or her to work hard, graduate and continue learning after high school.
- 2 CHECK GRADES.** Your son or daughter may say things are “fine” at school, but don’t stop checking grades on report cards, progress reports, assignments, tests and class projects. Most schools let you check your child’s progress online.
- 3 TALK TO TEACHERS.** Teachers know how hard students are working, how well they are behaving, the quality of their homework and what areas need improvement. Collect e-mail addresses or phone numbers of all your child’s teachers and check in periodically.
- 4 DON’T BUCKLE ON HOMEWORK.** If your child is not studying at home, ask why and check with teachers. It’s tough to hold the line, but making sure your child does his or her homework is crucial for academic success.
- 5 ASK FOR HELP.** Students who are struggling in a particular class may need extra help after school or with a tutor. Find out from your school where you can go for help and make sure your child gets the support he or she needs. Catching a problem area early can make a big difference.
- 6 MATH MATTERS.** Math exercises your brain and trains your mind to think logically — a skill that is extremely important in today’s complex world. Every occupation uses math in some way, and the fastest-growing, highest-paid jobs rely heavily on math skills. Even if your child struggles with math, don’t reinforce the myth that math is hard — enforce the fact that math is power!
- 7 GET INVOLVED.** Nothing will have a bigger impact on your child’s success than your involvement in his or her education: volunteer, participate in parent-teacher organizations and attend school events. Most schools offer parent nights or teacher-parent sessions that provide great information. Check your school’s calendar for details.
- 8 PLAN FOR THE FUTURE.** College is an important investment that will pay back for a lifetime. Call Learn More Indiana at 1-800-992-2076 to order a free copy of *Indiana’s Guide to Paying for College: An Introduction for Families and Students*. Apply for the Twenty-first Century Scholars GEAR UP program (www.scholars.in.gov or 1-888-528-4719). Open a savings account and investigate opportunities like Indiana’s 529 College Savings Plan (www.collegechoiceplan.com), which can help pay for education after high school. Remember, a few dollars saved each month now can make a big difference in the future.
- 9 LEAD BY EXAMPLE.** Show your child firsthand the importance of education. Take a class. Finish your diploma. Earn a college degree. Seeing you demonstrate a personal commitment to lifelong learning sends your child a powerful message about the importance of education.
- 10 LEARN MORE.** Learn More Indiana has free information to help Indiana students and families explore careers, plan and pay for college, stay on track for academic success, and more.



Learn More Indiana is a partnership of the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, the Indiana Department of Education, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development and the State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana, with additional support from Indiana’s colleges and universities, USA Funds, and the Lumina Foundation for Education — all working together to provide information that supports learning.

