

7th

GRADE

ONTRACK
YOUR GUIDE TO HIGH SCHOOL SUCCESS

What you need
to know: *Indiana's
Academic
Standards*

Find your
Style
Take the OnTrack Quiz!

**HOW TO
MAKE
YOUR
FUTURE
HAPPEN**

**7 quick TIPS
to succeed
in 7th grade**

KnowHow2GOIndiana.org

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



OnTrack for Life

Middle school 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 8 for a sneak peek at the standards for 7th grade.

Although college and a career might seem like they are a long way off, staying on track with your schoolwork and planning for the future are things you need to do right now. *OnTrack: 7th Grade* has some quick tips and information to help you succeed in 7th grade, and it gives you the scoop on four simple steps you can take now to plan and prepare for college.

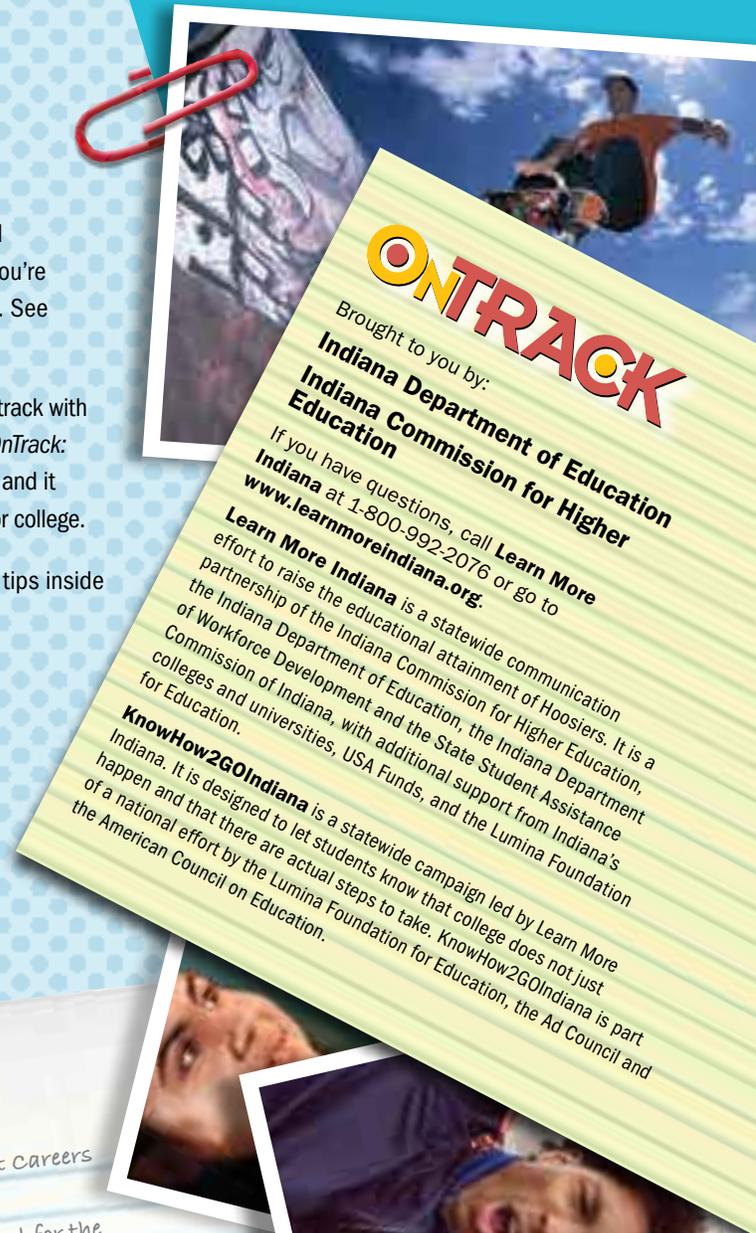
Education plays a big part in making your dreams happen — so check out the tips inside *OnTrack: 7th Grade* and share them with your family.

Have a great year!

Mitch Daniels *Dr. Suellen Reed* *Stan Jones*
Mitch Daniels Governor State of Indiana
Dr. Suellen Reed Superintendent of Public Instruction Indiana Department of Education
Stan Jones Commissioner Indiana Commission for Higher Education

Indiana's Academic Standards for Grade 7: What You'll Learn This Year

To see the "big picture" about what you can expect to know and be able to do by the end of 7th grade, check out page 8. You also can go to www.doe.in.gov/standards or call **1-800-992-2076**.



ONTRACK
Brought to you by:
Indiana Department of Education
Indiana Commission for Higher Education
If you have questions, call **Learn More Indiana** at 1-800-992-2076 or go to www.learnmoreindiana.org.
Learn More Indiana is a statewide communication effort to raise the educational attainment of Hoosiers. It is a partnership of the Indiana Department of Education, the Indiana Commission for Higher 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.
KnowHow2GOIndiana is a statewide campaign led by Learn More Indiana. It is designed to let students know that college does not just happen and that there are actual steps to take. KnowHow2GOIndiana is part of a national effort by the Lumina Foundation for Education, the Ad Council and the American Council on Education.

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Tips To Get It Together in 7th Grade

Let's get straight to the point: Only you can make your future happen, and the first step is getting the best education you can.

Middle school is the time to get it together before making the jump to high school.

It's a great time to prove to yourself and others your ability to work hard and succeed.

Here are some practical tips to use right now to make sure you do well in 7th grade:

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:

- ★ 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.
- ★ Employers want to hire workers they can count on, and regular school attendance shows dependability.

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. Blow it off and your grades will suffer; you'll lose the points for the assignment and miss an opportunity to learn the material before the test.

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. Experts also suggest scheduling a specific time each day for homework. Create the right environment — free of distractions — and have all your supplies on hand before you start.

Where To Go When You Need Homework Help

You can find help from many sources. Ask your teacher or school counselor about homework clubs, study tables, or where to go for free or low-cost tutoring in your community. Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology's Homework Hotline provides free math and science homework help. Students can visit the Web site at www.askrose.org or call the Homework Hotline from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. (EST) for free at 1-877-ASK-ROSE.



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.

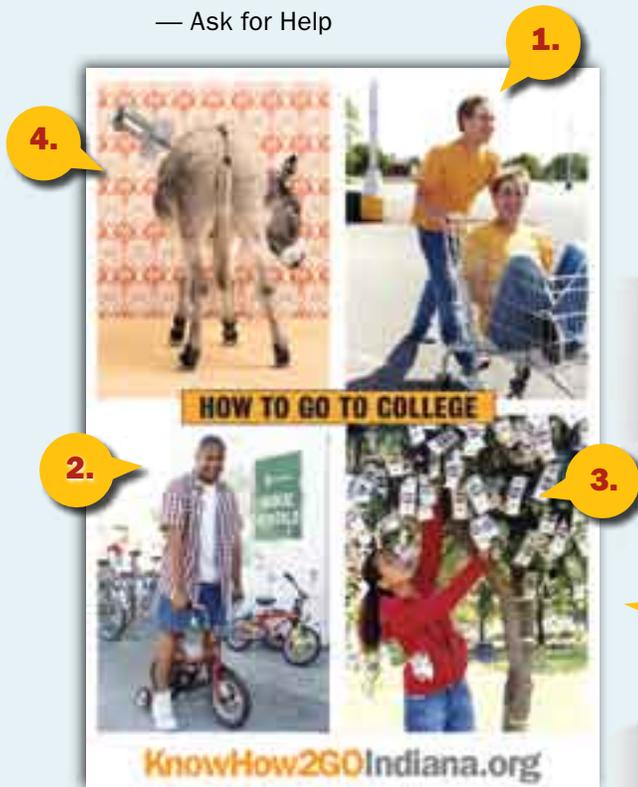
5 Work hard

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. Take the most challenging classes you can. (Check out page 11 for more information.) Grades matter, but it's more important to stretch yourself than to take easier classes. Students who go the extra mile will have more job opportunities and more college choices.

6 KnowHow2GO to college ...

Most 7th graders say they plan to go to college, but big dreams and good grades aren't enough. There are actual steps you need to take in 7th grade. KnowHow2GOIndiana spells it out in four steps:

1. Push Yourself
2. Find the Right Fit
3. Put Your Hands on Some Cash
4. Be a Pain, in a Good Way
— Ask for Help



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.



In addition to the information in this mini-magazine, the KnowHow2GOIndiana and Learn More Indiana Web sites are your connection for information on college and careers and how to succeed in school. Visit www.learnmoreindiana.org or www.KnowHow2GOIndiana.org for more tips, checklists, career interest inventories and other information about what you can do to get the future you want.

Find Your Style: Take the OnTrack Quiz



Are you:
auditory?
visual?
tactile?

Whether it is fashion, music or learning, everyone has his or her own style. Do you learn better when you hear things? When you see things? Or when you can hold something in your hands? Knowing your learning style will help you push yourself and do better in school.

Answer each question in this learning-style inventory as honestly as you can. Then add up the points to find out whether you are an auditory, visual or tactile learner — and how you can make your style work in the classroom.

	often	some- times	seldom
1. I can remember more about a subject through a lecture method with information, explanation and discussion.			
2. I prefer information to be written on the chalkboard with the use of visual aids and assigned readings.			
3. I like to write things down or take notes for visual review.			
4. I prefer to use posters and models or practice some activities in class.			
5. I need explanations of diagrams, graphs or visual directions.			
6. I enjoy working with my hands or making things.			
7. I enjoy developing and making graphs and charts.			
8. I can tell if sounds match when presented with pairs of sounds.			
9. I remember best by writing things down several times.			
10. I can understand and follow directions on maps.			
11. I do better in academic subjects by listening to lectures and tapes.			
12. I play with coins or keys in my pockets.			
13. I learn to spell by repeating words aloud rather than by writing them on paper.			
14. I can better understand a news article by reading about it in the newspaper rather than by listening to the radio.			
15. I chew gum or eat a snack while studying.			
16. I feel the best way to remember something is to picture it in my head.			
17. I learn spelling by "finger spelling" (drawing the letters with a finger).			
18. I would rather listen to a good lecture or speech than read about it.			
19. I am good at working and solving jigsaw puzzles and mazes.			
20. I grip objects in my hands during learning periods.			
21. I prefer listening to the news on the radio rather than reading about it in the newspaper.			
22. I obtain information on an interesting subject by reading relevant materials.			
23. I feel very comfortable touching others, hugging, shaking hands, etc.			
24. I follow spoken directions better than written ones.			

Now
add
it up
on p. 6



Add It Up: My Learning Style

Place the point value on the line next to the number for each question and then add up your points. The highest total determines your learning style.

Often = 5 points
Sometimes = 3 points
Seldom = 1 point

question number	points	
2		<h2>Visual Learner</h2> <p>You're the most common type of learner, making up about 65 percent of the population. Visual learners relate most effectively to written information, notes, diagrams and pictures. You might not absorb information if someone just tells it to you. (It's almost as if it didn't exist unless you see it written down.)</p> <p>Study tips: Take notes even when you've been given handouts or printed course notes. Look at — don't just listen to — all study materials and directions. Use or make your own charts, maps, notes and flashcards and practice visualizing or picturing words and concepts in your head. Write everything down for frequent and quick visual reference.</p>
3		
7		
10		
14		
16		
19		
22		
Total Visual		
1		<h2>Auditory Learner</h2> <p>You are the second most common type of learner, accounting for an estimated 30 percent of the population. As an auditory learner, you relate most effectively to the spoken word. You tend to listen to a lecture, then take notes afterward or rely on printed notes. Written information will have little meaning until it has been heard. It may help auditory learners to read written information aloud.</p> <p>Study tips: Read your assignments and study materials aloud — even if you feel a little silly at first — or use tapes. Taped lectures may help fill in the gaps in your own notes. Sit at the front of the classroom where you can hear well.</p>
5		
8		
11		
13		
18		
21		
24		
Total Audio		
4		<h2>Tactile Learner</h2> <p>You're a rare breed — one of only about 5 percent of the population. Tactile learners prefer a hands-on approach and learn best through touch and movement. You learn skills by imitation and practice.</p> <p>Study tips: You may take a little longer to learn information that isn't presented in a way that suits your learning style, but you can make schoolwork easier by adapting. Try typing your notes, using real objects or acting out reading assignments. Role playing helps, too. When studying cell structure in biology, for example, you and maybe another tactile learner could pretend to be different parts of the cell. Sound crazy? It couldn't hurt to try.</p>
6		
9		
12		
15		
17		
20		
23		
Total Tactile		



Push Yourself

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 7 standards and get a sneak peek at what you'll be learning this year, check out pages 8 and 9.)

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, mathematics and science.

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 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.

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.

7TH GRADE

2008-2009 ISTEP+ at a Glance

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

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

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.

What You Need To Know in 7th Grade

INDIANA'S ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Seventh 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 7th grade. And since our state has the best standards in the country, expect a world-class education. Check out the "big picture" below.

ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS

■ Vocabulary and Concept Development

Identify and use a variety of types of context clues (e.g., restatement, definition) to determine the meanings of words within particular texts. Use knowledge of Greek, Latin and Anglo-Saxon roots and word parts to understand subject-area vocabulary.

■ **Informational Text: Structure, Comprehension and Analysis** Compare and contrast the purposes and features of different types of informational texts. Identify and use the most complete, accurate and appropriate sources for particular purposes. Identify, chart and explain cause-and-effect connections, including those that are not explicitly stated within the text.

■ **Literary Text: Comprehension and Analysis** Analyze and describe the connection of setting, narrative voice, language, mood and tone to the plot and meaning of literary works of different lengths (e.g., short story, essay, novella, novel) within American, British and world literature. Compare reviews of literary works, identifying the main points of each.

■ **Writing: Informational, Research and Persuasive Texts** Use a variety of strategies to develop topic sentences. Determine the purpose, audience and organization for the piece of writing. Use reading and note-taking skills to find and summarize relevant information from sources selected for accuracy, appropriateness and reliability. Write pieces with a well-defined thesis and a variety of types of 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, a list or notebook of ideas, and various strategies to plan writing. Write biographical and literary texts that contain conflicts and resolutions, major and minor characters, meaningful settings, and/or expressive language. Display a command of basic

narrative strategies (e.g., timing, dialogue, detailed description) to advance the plot and develop characters. Review, revise and edit writing.

■ **English Language Conventions** Write sentences and paragraphs that show clear relationships between main and supporting ideas. Edit parts of sentences to correct pronoun antecedents, punctuation and verb tense agreement.

■ **Listening and Speaking** Develop persuasive speeches, oral summaries and research presentations that are organized to achieve particular purposes and are supported with relevant details, reasons and examples. Deliver presentations with effective speaking techniques. Analyze oral and media communications, evaluating the credibility of details and sources.

MATH

■ **Exponents** Use whole number exponents for repeated multiplication. Use scientific notation for large numbers.

■ **Proportions and Percentages** Use proportions and percentages to solve application problems involving the increase of a quantity and the decrease of a quantity. Solve problems involving percent, ratio, rate and similar triangles.

■ **Multiplication and Division with Fractions and Decimals** Understand and perform multiplication and division with negative decimals and fractions.

■ **Transformations** Identify and use the following transformations: translations, rotations and reflections.

■ **Solids** Find and use the surface area and volume of prisms and cylinders.

■ **Expressions** Evaluate numerical expressions and simplify algebraic expressions involving rational and irrational numbers.

■ **Linear Equations** Write and solve two-step equations and inequalities in one variable.

■ **Graphs of Lines** Find the slope of a line from its graph. Relate the slope of a line to similar triangles. Draw the graph of a line given its slope. Graph proportional relationships and identify the unit rate as the slope of the related line.

■ **Making Estimates and Data Displays** Use proportions to make estimates about a population based on a sample. Create, analyze and interpret data sets in multiple ways using bar graphs, frequency tables, line plots, histograms and circle graphs.

■ **Theoretical Probability** Understand that when all outcomes of an experiment are equally likely, the theoretical probability of an event is the fraction of outcomes in which the event occurs. Use theoretical probability and proportions to make predictions.

SCIENCE

■ **Formulating Conclusions** Carry out simple investigations and formulate appropriate conclusions. Give examples of different explanations for the same evidence. Explain why repeating an investigation would make the results more reliable. Give ideas for extending investigations in order to refine a conclusion.

■ **History** Describe and give examples of how the needs, attitudes, resources and values of a time period influence the direction of technological development in a variety of cultures and societies.

Physical Science

■ **Properties of Matter** Describe how atoms of any given element are alike but are unlike atoms of other elements. Give examples of how two or more different elements can come together to form a compound.

Push Yourself



■ **Energy** Describe how energy is transferred from place to place through radiation, convection and conduction. Describe the mechanism by which energy is transferred from one system to another: thermally, mechanically, electrically and/or electromagnetically.

Earth and Space Science

■ **Earth Systems** Describe how water in its different forms cycles through the structures of Earth and its atmosphere. Describe how the oceans' effects on climate are the result of water's high heat capacity, the circulation of water (e.g., major ocean currents) and the large volume of water in the oceans.

Earth and Space Systems

■ **Earth Structures** Compare and contrast the features of different rock types and rock formations (including evidence of the minerals, materials, and temperature and pressure conditions that created them). Explain how Earth processes going on today (e.g., burial, melting, uplift, erosion, orogenesis, vulcanism, sea-floor spreading) have operated over large expanses of geologic time to produce the geological record. Explain how fossils and other relative dating methods can be used to infer the order of geologic events, and describe how environmental conditions and life have changed over time.

Life Science

■ **Structures and Functions of Living Systems** **1.** Compare and contrast the major organelles within plant and animal cells. Give examples of single-celled and multicellular organisms. Explain how different kinds of cells continually divide to make more cells for growth and repair of a multicellular organism. Describe the hierarchical organization of multicellular organisms from cells to tissues to organs to systems within organisms. **2.** Infer the degree of relatedness among different organisms by analyzing similarities in internal and external structures. Explain why similarity in structural features is a better indicator of relatedness than similarity in behavior.

■ **Change in Living Systems** Explain why asexual reproduction usually results in offspring with genes identical (or nearly so) to those of the single parent. Give examples of organisms that undergo asexual reproduction. Compare asexual reproduction with sexual reproduction. Explain how specialized cells are formed as a result of cell division in a fertilized egg.

SOCIAL STUDIES

History

■ **Early Civilizations and Societies in Africa and Asia to 650 A.D./C.E.** Describe the cultural achievements, governing systems, religious beliefs and influences of early cultural hearths in Africa and Asia.

■ **Major Civilization in Africa, Asia and the Southwest Pacific to the 18th Century** Describe the development and achievements of the kingdoms of Ghana and Mali, the Mongol Empire, and Ming Dynasty. Describe early Japanese feudalism.

■ **Colonization and Imperialism in the 19th and 20th Centuries** Describe the impact of colonization and imperialism on Africa, Asia and the Southwest Pacific. Describe the impact of Confucianism on political and social thought in Asia.

■ **Africa, Asia and the Southwest Pacific in the 19th to the 21st Century** Describe the independence movements in Asia, Africa and the Southwest Pacific. Explain the influence of industrialization on the lives of individuals and the countries of Africa, Asia and the Southwest Pacific. Explain the influence of competing ideologies on governments in these regions of the world.

■ **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 Governments in Africa, Asia and the Southwest Pacific** Compare the Egyptian and Sumerian forms of government. Describe the early government of the Zhou Dynasty and the influence of Confucianism on the governments of China and Korea.

■ **Functions of Government in Africa, Asia and the Southwest Pacific** Compare the various routes to independence and colonial rule in Africa, Asia and the Southwest Pacific. Describe the role of citizens in these countries. Identify regional international organizations and explain their functions.

Geography

■ **Maps and Globes** Identify countries and use latitude and longitude to locate capital cities in Africa, Asia and the Southwest Pacific. Locate major mountain regions, bodies of water, deserts and climate regions of Africa, Asia and the Southwest Pacific.

■ **Human and Physical Systems** Describe the distribution of natural resources, people, languages and major religions in Africa, Asia and the Southwest Pacific. Explain the impact of ethnocentrism on cultural change.

Economics

■ **International Trade** Explain how trade has affected the history and development of countries in Africa, Asia and the Southwest Pacific. Identify Indiana's global, economic connections.

■ **Standards of Living** Compare the standards of living of countries in Africa, Asia and the Southwest Pacific using a variety of data, including gross domestic product. Explain how voluntary trade, savings and investment benefit countries and results in higher standards of living.



CORE40

GET WITH THE PROGRAM

You will make a lot of decisions while preparing for high school. One part you don't have to worry about is choosing which core academic courses to take.

In Indiana, all students need to take **CORE40** to graduate. **CORE40** is a set of courses in English/language arts, math, science and social studies that provides you with a solid foundation for college, work and the real world.

Completing Core 40 gives you:

- ✓ More career choices and skills for the jobs of the future.
- ✓ A better chance of getting into college and earning a degree.
- ✓ More options for financial aid and scholarships.

More Opportunities!

Course & Credit Requirements

English/Language Arts	8 credits <i>Including a balance of literature, composition and speech</i>
Mathematics All students must take a math or physics course during their junior or senior year.	6 credits <i>Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II or Integrated Math series I, II and III</i>
Science	6 credits <i>Biology I; Chemistry I or Physics I or Integrated Chemistry-Physics; and any additional Core 40 science course</i>
Social Studies	6 credits <i>U.S. History; U.S. Government; Economics; and either World History/Civilization or Geography/History of the World</i>
Directed Electives	5 credits <i>Any combination of world languages, fine arts and career/technical courses</i>
Physical Education	2 credits
Health and Wellness	1 credit
Electives Career Academic Sequence recommended.	6 credits
Total	40 credits

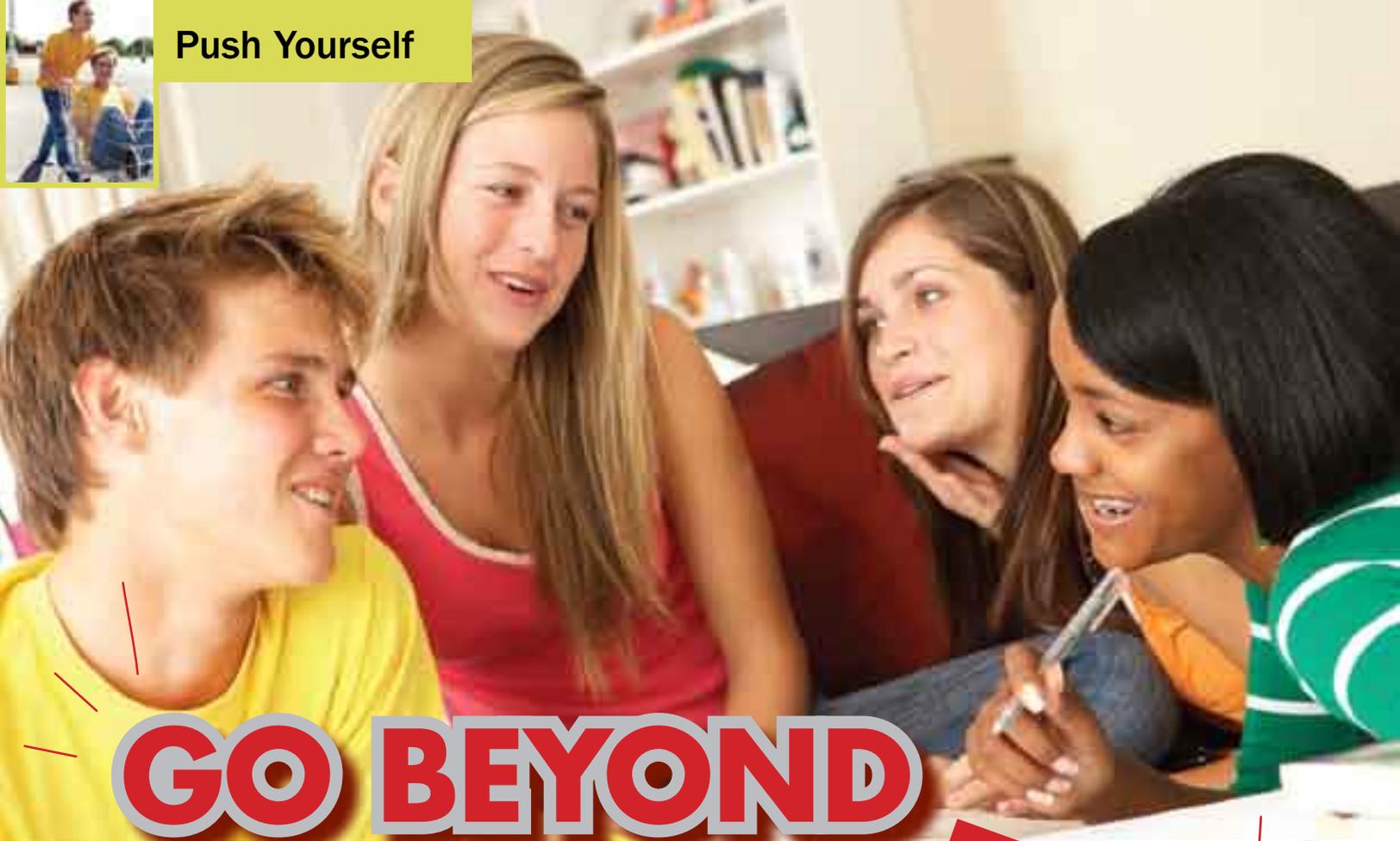


What's This about Electives?

CORE40 spells out only some of the courses you have to take. High school class schedules provide lots of time for electives.

Electives are courses that **you** choose and can include math and science, fine arts, career/technical courses — whatever you want. Choose your electives wisely and be sure to complete a Career Academic Sequence, which means taking classes to explore your interests and prepare for possible careers.

In addition to Core 40, schools may have local graduation requirements that apply to all students.



GO BEYOND CORE40

Better Future!

Take advantage of opportunities to learn more and achieve more:
Go beyond **CORE40**!

With some additional effort you can earn one of Indiana's advanced high school diplomas: **CORE40** with Academic Honors or **CORE40** with Technical Honors. To get an advanced diploma, you need to complete all **CORE40** requirements plus additional credits in specific subjects and have a grade point average of "B" or better, among other requirements. For more information, visit www.learnmoreindiana.org or see your school counselor.

All Indiana high schools offer Advanced Placement (AP) and dual-credit courses. These more rigorous courses provide both an opportunity to stretch yourself academically and a chance to graduate high school with college credits. When you start thinking about what classes to take in 8th, 9th and 10th grades, plan ahead and find out what AP and dual-credit courses your high school offers. Most challenging courses require certain other classes — called prerequisites — to be completed first, so try to take prerequisites early on.

Remember, colleges and employers look at both the courses you take and the grades you earn. Taking more challenging courses *and* doing well can help you get the opportunities you want.

INDIANA
CORE40
with Academic Honors

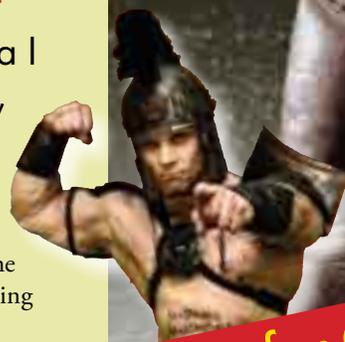
INDIANA
CORE40
with Technical Honors

important →

VALUE OF MATH

Maximize your options and consider taking Algebra I in 8th grade so you can take more advanced math, such as trigonometry and calculus, in high school. Why? There are lots of reasons.

- ✓ **It pays.** Every occupation uses math in some form. Also, some of the fastest-growing and highest-paying occupations, like those in engineering and technology, rely heavily on it.
- ✓ **Math exercises your brain.** At football practice, do athletes just spend their time throwing and catching a football? Of course not! To create a solid foundation for success on the field, they also run laps, lift weights and might even take ballet. Similarly, advanced math will train your mind to think logically and linearly, which is a skill that helps with everything from organizing papers for English class to winning debates with your parents.
- ✓ **Math appears in some surprising places.** The sciences and social sciences use math to explain the world; music relies on it to organize scores and create harmonies; doctors use it to calculate treatments; CEOs need it to run their companies.
- ✓ **Math gives you options.** Many students change their career plans throughout high school and college. By taking advanced classes now, you're ready in case you need them in the future. Plus, research shows that the more math you complete in high school, the better you will do in college.
- ✓ **You can use it to shine at your first job.** At some point in the next few years, there's a good chance you will have a part-time job at a store or restaurant. Good math skills will help you process transactions, calculate discounts and gauge your paycheck.
- ✓ **Math helps you make important decisions.** When it comes time to buy a car or pay for college, you'll want to make sure you make the most of your money, and to do that, you'll need the advanced math skills you learn in high school.



Prepare for College —
Knock out the
Tough Classes

Explore a Different Language

Most programs at Purdue University, Indiana University and other colleges will expect you to have taken two years (or more) of a world language in high school. You also may have to study a world language to graduate from college.

Who are these people? Visit www.KnowHow2GOIndiana.org to find out.



What's Hot in Indiana Careers

Want to know what careers are going to be hot in the future? Which ones will have the most job openings and pay the best salaries? Check out the **Hoosier Hot 50 Jobs** listed at www.learnmoreindiana.org/hoosierhotjobs.

You also can find out what education you need for different types of jobs with the *Indiana Career Guide: Skill Pathways for Your Future*, available at www.learnmoreindiana.org/skillpathways. The guide includes personal stories from people just like you who talk about how they found their careers.





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.



Why College?

Whatever your goals — changing the world or simply earning a good living to support a family — you will need more than a high school diploma to get a good job that pays well and has room to move up the career ladder.

One important thing to think about when choosing a job is whether there will be a lot of openings in that field. It will be easier to find a job in the fields that are growing fastest, and the

fields that will be growing fastest will require education after high school (two- and four-year college degrees, apprenticeship programs, or military training).

COLLEGE DEGREE CHEAT SHEET

associate's degree = two years of college

bachelor's degree = four years of college

master's degree = six years of college

doctorate or professional degree (law, medicine, etc.) = seven or more years of college

The Education you Need for the JOB You Want

Master's, doctorate or professional degree: Lawyer, doctor, architect, scientist, speech/language pathologist, university professor, economist, psychologist, priest, rabbi, dentist, veterinarian, public policy analyst, zoologist, management consultant

Bachelor's degree: Teacher, accountant, FBI agent, engineer, journalist, insurance agent, pharmacist, computer systems analyst, dietitian, writer, investment banker, graphic designer, social worker, public relations specialist, news anchor, landscape architect, computer engineer, special education teacher, geologist, architect, certified public accountant, stockbroker

Associate's degree or apprenticeship: Computer technician, surveyor, electrician, registered nurse, dental hygienist, medical laboratory technician, commercial artist, hotel/restaurant manager, engineering technician, automotive mechanic, administrative assistant, water and wastewater treatment worker, plant operator, heating/air-conditioning/refrigeration technician, paralegal/legal assistant, physical therapy assistant, surgical technologist, cardiovascular technologist, respiratory therapist, data-processing equipment repairer

High school diploma plus training: Bookkeeping/accounting assistant, flight attendant, office clerk, bank teller, cook, firefighter, paramedic, real-estate agent, hairdresser, medical transcriptionist, childcare worker, medical assistant, pest control worker

Source: U.S. Department of Education

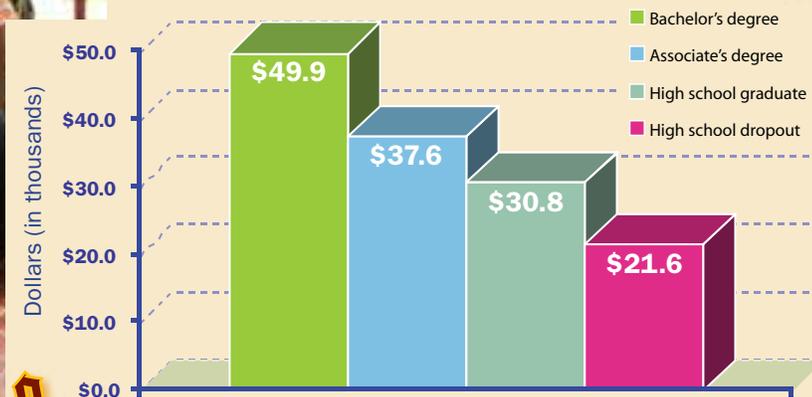


Learn More, Earn More

Money isn't the only thing you need to get the future you want, but getting a good job that earns a good paycheck gives you flexibility to pursue your dreams. The real story here is that the more you learn, the more you earn ...

Each year ...

Average annual earnings (in thousands) of full-time workers, by degree



Over a lifetime ...

Average lifetime earnings (in millions) of full-time workers, by degree

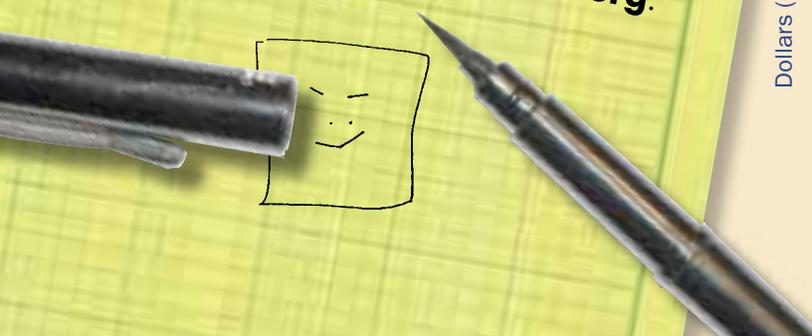


Source: College Board, Education Pays 2004: The Benefits of Higher Education for Individuals and Society

Are You Ready for the Real World?

The Ready for the Real World online quiz shows you how much it will cost to live the way you want. Check it out at

www.learnmoreindiana.org

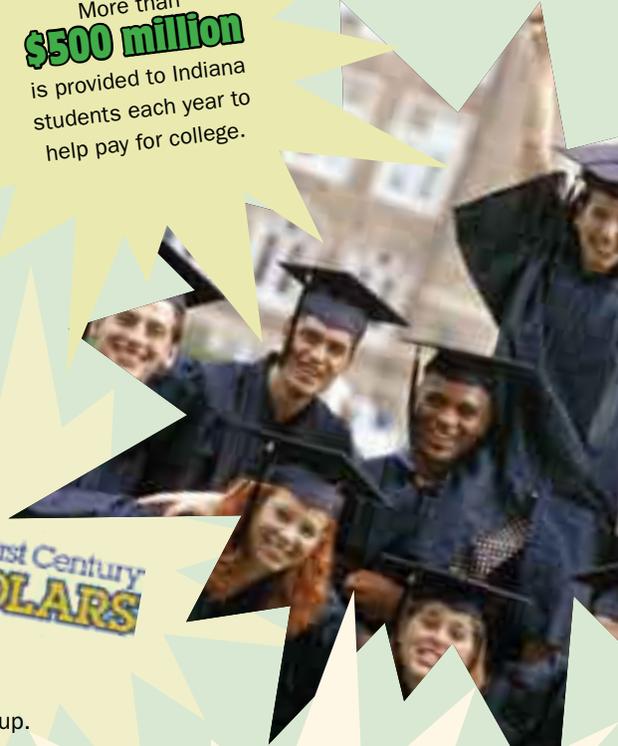


You Can Afford College!

College is expensive, but you can find the money to afford it. There are many resources to help.

Between now and your senior year of high school, you will get a lot of information on paying for college. Right now, start learning about different financial aid programs from your school counselor or by visiting www.learnmoreindiana.org.

More than **\$500 million** is provided to Indiana students each year to help pay for college.



Become a Twenty-first Century Scholar

The Twenty-first Century Scholars GEAR UP program is too great a deal to pass up.

Indiana started the Twenty-first Century Scholars GEAR UP program to ensure that all families can afford a college education for their children. Income-eligible 8th graders who enroll in the program and fulfill a pledge of good citizenship are **guaranteed the cost of four years of college tuition** at any participating public college or university in Indiana.

If you attend a private or an independent institution, the state will award an amount comparable to that of a public institution. If you attend a participating proprietary (private career) school, the state will award a tuition scholarship equal to that of Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana.

Once you get to college, students who are Twenty-first Century Scholars receive support to finish their college degrees. As a Twenty-first Century Scholar, you can hook up with free tutoring, a mentor, a part-time job and friends to hang out with.

But first you have to apply. Students and their parents must complete and return the application by **June 30 of the 8th grade year. Don't wait. Apply today.** There is an application in the middle of *OnTrack*, or you can apply online to www.scholars.in.gov. Questions? See your school counselor or call 1-888-528-4719.

Be a Twenty-first Century Scholar

Don't miss the deadline. Sign up now! See your school counselor, go online to www.scholars.in.gov or call 1-888-528-4719.

6 Ways To Increase Your Scholarship Chances

There are many resources to help you and your family understand financial aid and how to make college affordable. Scholarships also can help.

Here are some steps you can take right now to increase your chances of earning scholarships later.

- 1 Push yourself** — take challenging courses.
- 2 Get good grades.**
- 3 Join a club.**
- 4 Play a sport.**
- 5 Explore the arts.**
- 6 Volunteer.**

These activities also can help you grow as a person, explore careers, etc. ... It's win, win!

Get \$1 Million

Forget Vegas or the lottery — your odds of winning aren't very good. But college is a great investment in your future.

In 2000, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated that college graduates earn approximately \$1 million more over a lifetime than workers with just a high school education.





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 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?



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.



take a

B Y T E

out of the Internet

You've probably heard stories about people who have gotten into serious trouble because they put something online that went beyond their inner circle — such as a video on YouTube, personal information on MySpace or a photo on Facebook — or because they've met people online who persuade them to do things they shouldn't.

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

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 full name, home address, phone number, Social Security number, passwords, names of your family members, 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, 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.**

Write It Out

You have a lot of thoughts and ideas. A journal is a great place to keep them.

Here are a few things you can write about to help you get started:

- ✓ Is something bugging you? How could you solve the problem?
- ✓ What happened today? What do you hope will happen tomorrow?
- ✓ What does your perfect future life look like? What do you do? Where do you live?

Some people keep their thoughts in a computer blog, but if you keep yours in a journal, you can put the pages away so no one else can read them. Remember, anything you write online is stored forever, even if you later change your mind.



MAKE IT HAPPEN

Your 7th Grade Checklist To Stay on Track

1 Push Yourself

- Read *OnTrack: 7th Grade* from cover to cover.
- Focus on your classes and stay on top of homework assignments.
- Take the learning-style assessment on page 5 to understand the ways you learn new information best.
- Consider taking Algebra I, a world language or both in 8th grade.

2 Find the Right Fit

Explore careers.

- Complete a career interest inventory online at www.learnmoreindiana.org.
- Visit www.driveofyourlife.org to explore some more.

Get involved.

- Join clubs, play sports, explore the arts and volunteer — great ways to expand your career interests and prepare for future scholarship opportunities.



Start thinking about college now.

- Explore Indiana's public universities and private colleges online at www.learnmoreindiana.org.
- Ask to visit universities or a college fair in your area. It's never too early to start gathering information.

3 Put Your Hands on Some Cash

- Apply for the Twenty-first Century Scholars GEAR UP program now to help pay for college later (see page 16).
- Do the Ready for the Real World activity online at www.learnmoreindiana.org to test your financial savvy.
- If you don't have a Social Security number, request one at www.ssa.gov or by calling 1-800-772-1213 — you'll need it for financial aid and job applications.
- Attend programs in your community on how to pay for college.
- Save money. College is a great investment in your future!

4 Be a Pain, in a Good Way: Ask for Help

- Discuss your future plans with your family and other adults.
- Bookmark www.learnmoreindiana.org and add 1-800-992-2076 to speed dial. You can turn to Learn More Indiana for tips on how to do well in school now and how to get to college later.



10 Ways To Help Your Student Succeed

- 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 student 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. Encourage your child to take and succeed in math; he or she should take a rigorous math course all four years of high school (no slacking senior year). 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 student’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. Try it out: Visit the Web site or call the Helpline today.

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.

