

When to Start Talking About College With Your Teen

Contributed by Jeff Mathes

My oldest son is 15 and will be starting his sophomore year of high school soon. He knows he is going to college, now we are starting to identify where he will go. My wife works for a university so we get free tuition and he knows that is a possibility. On the other hand, he has picked out other schools that interest him.

The problem is that he doesn't take his grades too seriously. Like any high school boy, his interest lies in other areas like girls, sports, learning to drive and hanging out. So we have hit that brick wall where we are trying to get him to realize the importance of doing well in high school now especially if wants to go somewhere besides the school his mom works for.

A college degree has always been emphasized in my household so it is expected that he will choose this route. We also know that when he applies himself, he can easily get A's. So we have really started pushing academics now.

College admissions officers will be looking at the cumulative GPA for high school so every course counts. You should be starting the conversation when your child starts high school. Every course that is chosen during that time in high school can determine whether or not your child will be admitted.

Everything that is done in high school has an impact including the extracurricular activities. Does this mean you need to push your child to excel...no. Just encourage them and give them positive feedback to help them do the best they can.