Why is College Important?

Going to college is more important now than it has ever been, and it’s important that middle school students set their goals for education after high school early. The following statements are included in the Benefits of Going to College student handout and are designed to show them that a college education is a good use of time, money and brainpower. Review the handout with your child and use the “Personalize it!” prompts to bring the conversation back home. Your personal experiences and insights can really make a difference when discussing these issues.

From the handout:

**College graduates have better career options, greater chance of landing a job, and a better chance for progress in their career.**

- It is estimated that in 2028 there will be 19 million more jobs for educated workers than there are qualified people to fill them. (Source: KnowHow2Go)
- The more education you have, the more likely it is that you will have a job. College gives you more choices in careers and more flexibility to change jobs.

**Personalize it!**

- Discuss the ways jobs and job opportunities have changed since you were in school. How have education requirements changed since you graduated?
- Learn more about your child’s dream job and what they feel might be satisfying about it. Jobs need to be about more than just making money.
- What jobs are available in the local area? Which of those jobs interest them?
- Provide an example of when you changed jobs and why. What benefits or challenges did the situation present?

From the handout:

**College graduates have a higher yearly income and greater lifetime earnings.**

- According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2005, the average income for a Bachelor’s Degree holder was $54,689 versus an income of $19,915 for a high school graduate.
- A Bachelor’s Degree holder earns twice as much in a lifetime as a high school graduate.

**Personalize it!**

- What are your goals for the future? How will your yearly income affect (or not affect) those goals?
- Stress the costs of living and goals they have set for themselves.

From the handout:

**College gives you a chance to network, improve your social skills, expand your extracurricular activities, and a build a network of friends.**

- College offers an opportunity to meet new people, improve communication skills and become more self-disciplined.

**Personalize it!**

- Discuss how more education can have an effect on self-confidence.
- Give them some first-hand information about your job and how it interests you. What have you learned about other people?
Why is College Important?

Hear college students’ perspectives about why college made a difference for them. Each video’s web page includes questions to help start a conversation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Video Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why Go to College (Marcus)</td>
<td>Marcus discusses his decision to go to a community college and while there, he learns he is interested in studying for a degree in finance and continues his education at a university. His community college experience helped him decide on a career.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why Go to College (Gabriela)</td>
<td>Gabriela discusses the ways she had to become more responsible in her approach to education, and college helped her do that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why Go to College (Todd)</td>
<td>Todd explains how he wanted to become a video game designer and found that he needed a college education to make that dream a reality.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the handout:

**College helps you improve your decision-making, communication, and analytical skills.**
- Businesses want to hire people who know how to think critically and solve problems.

**College graduates have better health and standard of living.**
- Statistics show that college grads have better health and exercise more. Employers often offer health care plans and wellness programs. Grads tend to have more job satisfaction and time off for recreation.
  
  (Source: College Board, Education Pays: The Benefits of Higher Education for Individuals and Society)

**Personalize it!**
- Describe a challenge/issue you experienced (either at work or in the home) and how you addressed it.
- Why would an employer want an employee with critical thinking and problem-solving skills?
- Talk about the role of health, wellness, and recreation in long-term success.

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**Additional Resources**

ownyourownfuture.com/9th/why/video-hub/why-go-to-college-marcus

ownyourownfuture.com/9th/why/video-hub/why-go-to-college-gabriela

ownyourownfuture.com/9th/why/video-hub/why-go-to-college-todd
Benefits of going to college

There are many reasons to go to college. Here are a few to start thinking about!

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