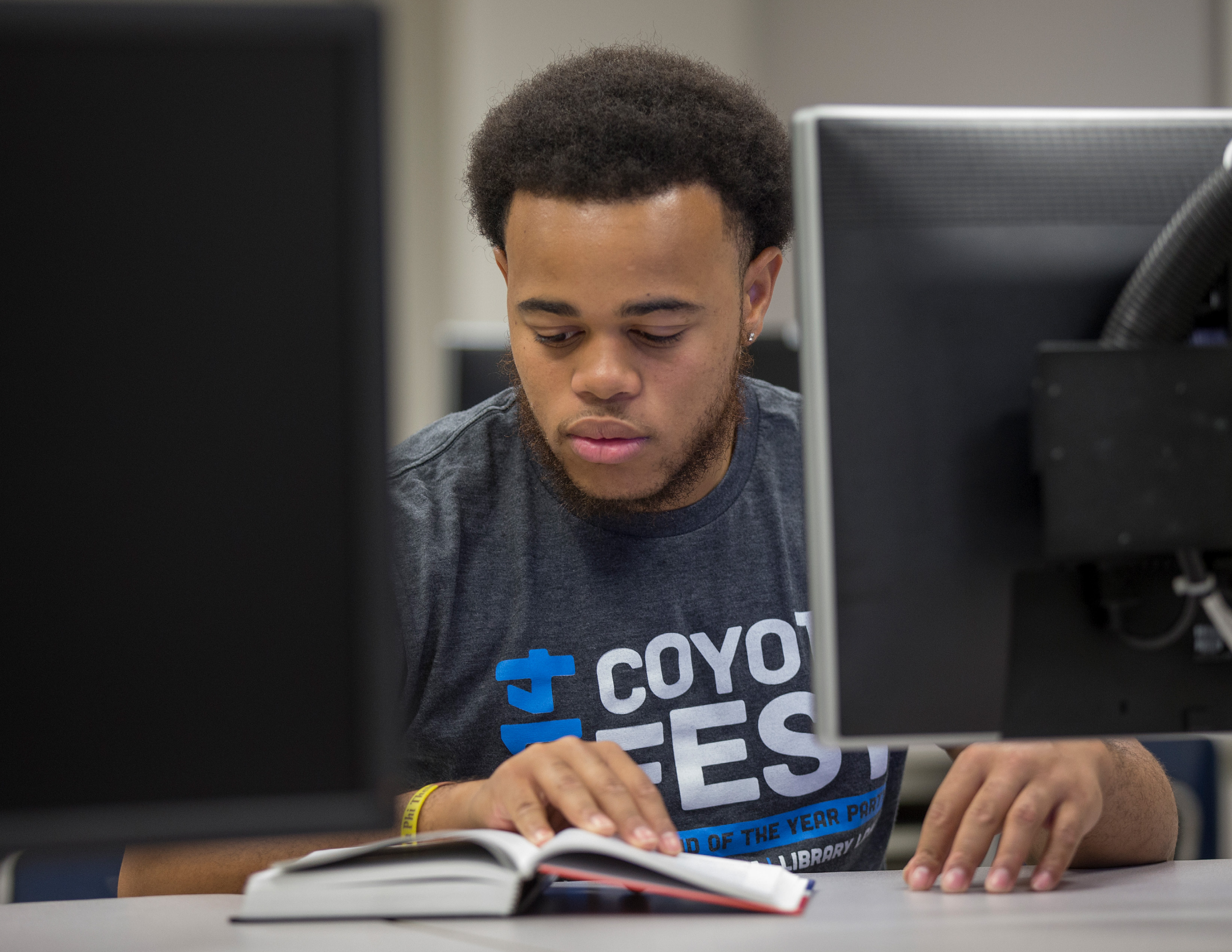


Your Family College Planner





Planning for **the Future**

Whether your student is just beginning middle school or completing middle school, it is never too soon or too late to start planning for college.

The purpose of this planner is to provide families and guardians with practical tools and tips to help prepare their students for college. Within these pages are sections designed for each phase of a student's journey, from middle school to the first year of college.

Now, more than ever, a college degree is within reach. At the CSU college is possible; it is affordable; and it transforms lives. The CSU is committed to provide all students access to a quality education.

**Here are 10 reasons
to attend the CSU!**



Your student's journey starts today. We'll be with you every step of the way!



NEARLY
50%

OF CSU
UNDERGRADUATES
RECEIVE THE
PELL GRANT

ONE IN
10
EMPLOYEES IN
CALIFORNIA IS A
CSU GRADUATE

MORE THAN
65%
OF CSU STUDENTS
ARE PEOPLE OF
COLOR

About the California State University



23
UNIVERSITIES.

- The California State University (CSU) is the largest four-year public university in the nation, spanning 23 campuses from Cal Poly Humboldt and Chico State to the north to CSU San Marcos and San Diego State to the south.
- Nearly 460,000 students are pursuing their degrees at the CSU and nearly one-third are the first in their families to attend college.

- The CSU educates the most ethnically, economically and academically diverse student body in the U.S.
- More than half of CSU students are from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds.
- The CSU awards nearly half of California's bachelor's degrees and the university provides more than half of all undergraduate degrees earned by California's Latinx, African American and Native American students combined.
- One in 10 employees in California is a CSU graduate, and one in 20 college graduates nationwide earned their degree from the CSU.

LEARN MORE AT:



The Value of a College Education

- **A Bridge to Your Student's Career**

Students will need a college degree to be competitive in the workforce. Today, an estimated two-thirds of all job openings require a college degree—and that percentage will only increase.

- **Achieving Upward Mobility**

College graduates typically earn \$1 million more over their lifetimes than people who have only a high school diploma ... and they are far less likely to be unemployed.

- **Impact of Earning a Degree**

Earning a college degree will prepare your student intellectually and socially for their future. College graduates have better career opportunities, job security and earning potential.

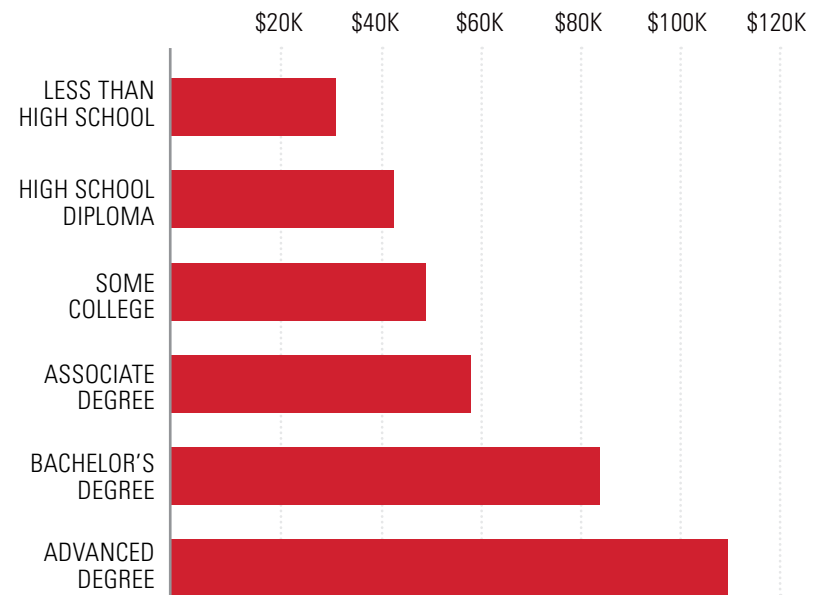
- **Connecting to a Community**

The global pandemic has made clear how important a community is for youths. Going to college can add your student's sense of belonging and feeling connected to a peer group, which can expand their own perspective based on diverse backgrounds and experiences.

High School Graduates Versus College Graduates Salary Pay Scale



A COLLEGE DEGREE PAYS OFF Annual wage and salary income



SOURCE: American Community Survey, 1-year Estimates, 2021.





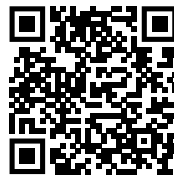
Help Your Student Find the Right Fit: **Choosing a CSU Campus**

California has a wide range of higher education opportunities for residents. Students can choose from private universities and California public university systems such as the University of California, the California State University or the California Community Colleges.

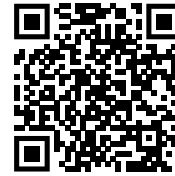
The number of choices can be overwhelming. You can help guide your student through their selection process to find the best fit for them. Set aside time to discuss college with your student. Let your student take the lead in expressing their interests, and be supportive of their college choices. When they're ready, arrange an in-person or virtual visit to your student's top campus choices.

Choosing a **CSU Campus**

If your student is interested in attending a CSU, they need to submit only one application. Students can select from 23 CSU campuses, each with unique personalities that reflect their region, their academic specialties and their size. Learn more about each campus by visiting:



Use the **CSU Campus Match Tool** at:



to find out which campus offers what matters most to your student.

These Include:

- Location—close to home or farther away?
- Size—smaller student body or larger, more diverse campus?
- Degrees offered
- Academics and extracurriculars such as clubs, sports, student services and campus culture
- Cost to attend the campus
- Financial aid packages

Preparation and CSU Admission Resources

Preparing and applying to college requires early planning. Use these CSU references to help you and your student understand how to be academically prepared and to learn about the CSU admission process.

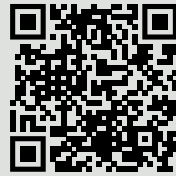
Preparing for College:



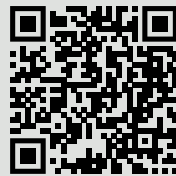
Academic Planner
to Track “A-G” Courses:



Choosing a Degree:



Campus Events:



Paying for College

College is an investment in your student’s future. Take some time to research college cost(s) with your student. The cost of attending college is more than just tuition and campus fees. Other items, such as housing, commuting and out-of-state tuition, should be considered.

How Much Does It Cost to Attend the CSU?

The CSU is the nation’s largest and most affordable public four-year university system, opening the door to educational opportunities for nearly half a million students and awarding more than 130,000 degrees each year.

Use this Cost of Attendance tool to learn what it costs to attend each of the CSU campuses.



MORE THAN
80%

OF CSU
STUDENTS RECEIVE
FINANCIAL AID

60%

OF CSU FINANCIAL AID
RECIPIENTS HAVE THE
FULL COST OF THEIR
TUITION COVERED

MORE THAN HALF OF THE
CSU'S BACHELOR'S DEGREE
RECIPIENTS FINISH WITH

**ZERO
DEBT**



Financial Aid

More than eighty percent of students at the California State University receive some type of financial aid. Chances are good that your student is eligible, too. That's why it's important to apply for aid using the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the California Dream Act Application (CADAA) for California Assembly Bill 540 eligible students. AB 540 grants students meeting certain criteria an exemption from paying nonresident tuition at the CSU.

Federal and state government grants are available to students based on financial need and do not have to be repaid. These include federal Pell Grants, Cal Grants and State University Grants. Other types of financial aid include scholarships, work study, student loans and parent loans.

Types of Financial Aid Programs

- Federal Pell Grants
- Cal Grant A and B Grants
- State University Grant
- Educational Opportunity Program Grant

LEARN
MORE AT:



VISIT:



to learn about
financial aid
programs
available to
students.

NAVIGATING THE FINANCIAL AID PROCESS

It is never too early to start preparing financially for college. Understanding the financial aid process and learning “what to do when” will help your family know what to expect when it is time to apply for financial aid for college. Use this timeline to learn the basics of the financial aid process and deadlines.

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER

Create an FSA ID if your student plans to complete The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (**FAFSA**) Application.



OCTOBER 1

The FAFSA and the California Dream Act Application opens. Apply early for the best chances of receiving gift aid such as grants and scholarships.

MARCH 2

Priority deadline to submit the FAFSA, the California Dream Act Application, and to apply for **Cal Grants**.



Financial Aid Tips

Here are some tips to help guide your student in college financial planning.

Learn how financial aid works so that you can help your student with the process.

Teach your student financial literacy, including the basics of a checking and savings account and how credit cards work.

Three days to three weeks after your student submits their FAFSA:

Your student will receive their Student Aid Report (**SAR**) which is a summary of the FAFSA data they submitted.

FEBRUARY-MAY

Complete the verification process if selected.

MARCH-APRIL

Schools typically send out financial aid decisions during this time. Compare financial aid packages. Learn about deadlines and important paperwork they may need to submit to the university to complete their financial aid process to receive aid.

Student Financial Literacy Resource:



Use the Federal Student Aid Estimator to find out how much federal student aid your student may receive.



Open a 529 College Savings Plan, a state-sponsored, tax-advantaged college savings plan that helps families and individuals plan for the cost of higher education. Anyone can contribute, including grandparents, other family members and friends. A 529 investment makes a great gift.



Encourage your student to apply for scholarships.

SCHOLARSHIP TIPS:



Goal Setting

It is never too early to begin planning for college. Encourage your middle-school student to think seriously about attending college. Talk with your student about setting academic and personal goals. Working together will give you the opportunity to have meaningful discussions about setting reasonable goal expectations. Goal setting can be daunting, so make it fun!

The SMART Goal Approach Is One Way to Help Your Student Set Goals.



LEARN THE FIVE ELEMENTS OF SMART GOALS:

- S** SPECIFIC—Clearly state your goal
 - M** MEASURABLE—Ensure you can measure success
 - A** ATTAINABLE—Set goals you know you can achieve
 - R** RELEVANT—Set goals relevant to your education
 - T** TIME BOUND—Set deadlines for completion
-



SMART GOALS for STUDENTS

Hello, my name is (YOUR NAME) !
My SMART GOAL is to (describe your goal here)



My plan is to achieve this goal by doing
(describe what, where, why...)

SPECIFIC



I plan to finish everything by (estimate
how long it will take)



TIMELY

I will know that I have fulfilled my goal
by (describe what you will measure,
compare, or check)

MEASURABLE



This goal is very important for me
because (describe what this goal will
enable you in the future)



REALISTIC

I know that this is achievable
because (describe what has convinced
you that you can do it)

ACHIEVABLE



Family Activity: My Student's Future



STEP 1 Set aside a weekend before the start of each school year to speak with your student about their strengths and interests. Find areas that interest them and set goals for how they can learn more and even get experience in those areas. Help expand your student's perspectives by introducing them to subjects—such as science, technology, engineering, art, math, debate and music—that may not be covered in their current academic coursework.

STEP 2 Next, schedule time to check in with your student on their future aspirations.



STEP 3 Ask your student about their goals in five-year increments. For example, you can say:

"You are in seventh grade now; what do you think you would like to do five years from now?"

"Where do you see yourself 10 years from now?"

"What skills and experiences do you think you'll need to meet these goals?"







Academic Tips

- Show interest in your student's studies by talking with them daily about what they are learning and doing in school.
 - Encourage your student to read for at least 30 minutes a day.
 - Provide your student with a regular place to study.
 - Remind your student to take detailed notes in class, organize them by subject and review them at home each day.
 - Help your student develop the habit of studying a little every night.
- Encourage your student to take algebra 1 by eighth grade.
 - Acknowledge and reward your student's academic efforts.

VISIT [SCHOLASTIC.COM](https://www.scholastic.com) FOR
SUGGESTIONS IN TALKING
WITH YOUR STUDENT:



STUDY TIPS:



Well-Being Tips

Supporting your student's development of strong social skills and emotional competence builds a solid foundation for success in their academics and personal lives. Important social and emotional competencies include:

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Social Awareness
- Relationship Skills
- Responsible Decision-Making



Introduce your student to skills and strategies to help them manage stress and anxiety they may feel. Help them to identify and name the emotions they are feeling.



Now is the time to start to consider house rules for your student on the use of social media. Do they want to set up their own accounts? Make an agreement about behavior on social media as well as frequency of use.



A Checklist for Success



Help make college a real goal for your student. Talk to them often about college, and be sure to ask for their thoughts, questions, and ideas about where they might want to attend.

Encourage your student to take challenging and interesting classes to prepare for high school.

Explore extracurricular programs that inspire your student. Help them find a school or community activity where they can further their interests and learn new things.

Help your student develop strong study habits, including developing the habit of studying a little every night.

If your student is struggling in a class, get help from a teacher or arrange for a tutor.

Meet regularly with your student's teachers and counselors.

Attend back-to-school night or parent teacher conferences to get to know your student's teachers, their expectations and to learn about school programs and policies.



MIDDLE SCHOOL MEMORIES AND MILESTONES

Celebrate your student's progress and achievements as they happen!

PASTE PHOTOS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL MEMORIES INTO FRAMES





AUGUST YEAR _____

**“Learn as much as you can while you are young, since life becomes too busy later.”
— Dana Stewart Scott**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

GOALS FOR THE MONTH

- 01 _____
- 02 _____
- 03 _____



CAL STATE FRESNO - GEOLOGY RESEARCH

Family Activity: Family Time

As your student prepares for the new school year, it's important to talk to about what they are excited about and what they are most nervous about. Invite your student to share one or two things about the new school year they are excited about doing (like trying out for school sports teams or meeting new friends), and one or two things they are nervous about (like learning new subjects or meeting new teachers). Encourage your student to explain why these things excite them or make them nervous. (Ask questions like, "What is it about meeting new teachers that makes you nervous?").

SEPTEMBER YEAR _____

NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

“Success is its own reward, but failure is a great teacher too, and not to be feared.”

— Sonia Sotomayor

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

GOALS FOR THE MONTH

- 01 _____
- 02 _____
- 03 _____



Family Activity: Museum Tours

Take this opportunity as a family to learn more about Hispanic and Latino culture by going to an art museum near you. You can try the Museum of Latin American Art in Long Beach, The Mexican Museum in San Francisco, the Latino Art Museum in Pomona, Casa Dolores in Santa Barbara or the Plaza de Cultura y Artes in Los Angeles. You can also take virtual art tours through the San Diego Museum of Art or the DC Latino Street Murals Virtual Tour.

OCTOBER YEAR _____

**“Autumn whispered to the wind, ‘I fall; but always rise again.’”
– Angie Weiland-Crosby**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

GOALS FOR THE MONTH

- 01 _____
- 02 _____
- 03 _____



CSU STUDENT PLAYING XYLOPHONE

Family Activity: Bonding Time

With the school year in full swing, take the opportunity to get some bonding time with your student by practicing with them a sport or instrument that they are looking forward to playing during the school year. If you don't know the rules or basics of playing the sport or instrument, invite your student to teach you! Then play a game or host a musical concert for each other!

NOVEMBER YEAR _____

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

**“If we wonder often, the gift of knowledge will come.”
— Arapaho Tribe proverb**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

GOALS FOR THE MONTH

- 01 _____
- 02 _____
- 03 _____



NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE CELEBRATION

Family Activity: Honoring Native American Heritage Month

To honor Native American Heritage Month, take some time as a family to learn about the local native land history in your area. You can do this by visiting the Native Land website and type in your address. The map will zoom in to identify the tribes that first lived in your area. As a family, learn more about the history of the tribes in your area and what one thing you can learn from the Native Americans of your area.

DECEMBER YEAR _____

**“Be present in all things and thankful for all things.”
— Maya Angelou**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

GOALS FOR THE MONTH

- 01 _____
- 02 _____
- 03 _____



PHOTO BY CAROLINE HERNANDEZ

Family Activity: Celebrating Other Winter Holidays

Christmas isn't the only holiday that happens in December. Kwanza and Hanukkah, as well as Boxing Day, winter solstice, Las Posadas, and St. Nicholas Day all occur during this month. Choose as a family one winter holiday and immerse yourselves in the culture and history of that holiday. For example, for Kwanzaa, research the seven core principles and arrange a display; or for Las Posadas, learn about its origins and a carol associated with the holiday. This could be a new holiday tradition in your home!

JANUARY YEAR _____

**“If I cannot do great things, I can do small things in a great way.”
— Martin Luther King, Jr.**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

GOALS FOR THE MONTH

- 01 _____
- 02 _____
- 03 _____



MLK COMMUNITY SERVICE

Family Activity: Acts of Service

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. imparted a legacy of community service and making positive changes in Black communities. You and your family can honor him by doing an act of service together--something that can impact the lives of others in a positive way. For example, you and your student can volunteer at an animal shelter, or at your local library, or donate clothes and food to local charities. Think of other ways that you and your family can make an impact in your community.

FEBRUARY

YEAR _____

NATIONAL AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH

“Be present in all things and thankful for all things.”

— **Rosa Parks**

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

GOALS FOR THE MONTH

01

02

03



STUDENTS DANCING FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Family Activity: Celebrate African American History Month

National African American History Month is an opportunity for you and your family to become familiar with the historical and current contributions of African Americans in your city. During this month, you and your family can visit some sites, activities, and Black-owned businesses to learn and experience African American history, art, and culture. Research some places in your area or ask friends for recommendations.

MARCH YEAR _____

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

“Believe in yourself, learn, and never stop wanting to build a better world.”

— Mary McLeod Bethune

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

GOALS FOR THE MONTH

- 01 _____
- 02 _____
- 03 _____



Family Activity: Discover Your Own Women's History!

In celebration of Women's History Month, encourage your student to learn about the women in your family. Gather the women in your family (your grandma, aunts, cousins, etc.) and ask them to share their stories and any keepsakes they have in their possession (pictures, trinkets, etc.). Work with your student to create a scrapbook of the memories that were shared with others. This scrapbook will honor the women in your family for years to come!

APRIL YEAR _____

**“You are never too small to make a difference.”
– Greta Thunberg**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

GOALS FOR THE MONTH

- 01 _____
- 02 _____
- 03 _____



EARTH DAY CSU DOMINGUEZ HILLS

Family Activity: Celebrate Earth Day!

Earth Day is an opportunity for us to give back to nature and to learn how we can conserve it. In celebration of Earth Day, you and your student can research native trees or plants. Choose one of them and, as a family, plant it in your yard or in a pot in your home!

MAY YEAR _____

APIA MONTH (ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER DESI AMERICAN)

“Persevere like a bird in the wind.”
— **Samoa proverb**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

GOALS FOR THE MONTH

- 01 _____
- 02 _____
- 03 _____



Family Activity: Support Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Organizations

Did you know that, as of 2020, almost 16% of California’s population is Asian or Pacific Islander? That’s over 6 million people! And there are many AAPI businesses and organizations that you and your family can support this month. Have your student research local businesses that they would like to support.

JUNE

YEAR _____

LGBTQ PRIDE MONTH

“It is absolutely imperative that every human being’s freedom and human rights are respected, all over the world.”

– Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

GOALS FOR THE MONTH

01

02

03



CAL STATE FULLERTON - PRIDE

Activity Idea: Have a Conversation!

Encourage your student to answer honestly and openly. Ask questions like: What does it mean to have pride? What does a rainbow represent to you? Have you ever felt left out or misunderstood? What was that experience like? Think about what it would be like if everybody was the same and share your thoughts. What does it look like to stand up for yourself? What does it look like to stand up for someone else? Relate with your own stories. Have an honest conversation and connect with your student.

JULY YEAR _____

PLASTIC FREE JULY

**“Many of us ask what can I, as one person, do, but history shows us that everything good and bad starts because somebody does something or does not do something,”
– Sylvia A. Earle**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

GOALS FOR THE MONTH

- 01 _____
- 02 _____
- 03 _____



PHOTO BY ESTÉE JANSSENS

Family Activity: Make a Summer Memory Book!

Summer is a great time to make memories with family and friends. A great way to look back on your summer memories is to create a memory book. Ask your student to collect any pictures, brochures, pamphlets, or small items that can be placed in a blank album or scrapbook. Ask family members to contribute their memories to the book as well and enjoy looking back on your memories throughout the year!



Study Skills, Tools and Tips for Growth and Success

Share these tips and tools with your student to motivate them to learn skills and develop habits that will help them reach their life goals.

Sixth Grade

Brush Up on Your Reading:

By the sixth grade, students are expected to read more challenging texts that have a bigger vocabulary and to identify the themes of the text and cite evidence. To prepare for sixth-grade English, read stories, poems and plays and identify the themes and how characters are responding to the challenges they face. Support what you are finding with facts and details from the text.

Gratitude Talk:

Let's think about what it means to have gratitude. Dr. Giacomo Bono, a professor from CSU Dominguez Hills, defined gratitude as "the appreciation people feel when somebody has done something kind or helpful for them or when they recognize the good things and people they have in their lives." In thinking about gratitude, what emotions would you use to describe it? What do you think about when thinking about gratitude? How about people? What memories do you associate with gratitude? Write or draw all these thoughts down and share them with a close friend or family member.

Getting Organized:

Start getting into a habit of tracking and being reminded about important deadlines (for example, important due dates for papers and exam dates). You can use a notebook planner or an app on your phone (like Remember the Milk www.rememberthemilk.com or Evernote www.evernote.com).



Tools and Tips for Growth & Success



Learning History:

With African American History Month, take this opportunity to understand how African American authors, activists, artists, and politicians influenced, and continue to influence, the world we live in now. Read about the life of one African American changemaker, such as one in A-Z African American Visionaries from [Education.com](https://www.education.com). While you are reading, answer these questions: Where did they grow up? What led them to do their work as an adult? What long-lasting impact did they make in the U.S.?

Getting Ready for Smarter Balanced Assessments:

It's always good to get prepared for tests! For the Smarter Balanced Assessments, prepare by doing some practice tests that are free online through the Smarter Balanced website [sampleitems](https://www.smarterbalanced.org). Ask your parent, guardian or sibling to do a time call so you can test how long it takes you to complete one test.



Time for Mindfulness:

As you near the end of the school year, be mindful of the things your body and mind need to recharge for the next day. Researchers have found that doing mindfulness activities can help students emotionally and intellectually. Mindfulness activities you can do include lying down on your bedroom floor or on your bed and doing deep breathing for five minutes; going on a silent nature walk (which means that instead of talking, you are observing your feelings as you walk); or doing some focused stretching (or yoga, as it's otherwise called).

Seventh Grade

Tools and Tips for Growth & Success

Practice Writing:

By the seventh grade, you are expected to deepen your writing skills by using analysis or paying close attention to details and providing proof or examples to support what you are saying. To practice this skill, start writing in a journal of things that happened in your day. For example, if you read about something interesting, write about why it was interesting to you. What made it interesting? Are there particular things you can point to that shows why it was interesting to you?

Time for a Review:

Reviewing notes is a great skill to have because it helps to grow your abilities in retaining information and organizing your thoughts. This will also help you well into your adulthood and career. Start exercising this skill by reviewing the notes you take for class. After every school day, take some time to read through the main points you had written for a particular class session and make a note of what information is still missing or unclear to you. You can ask your teacher questions the next day. By building on your notes, you can have clearer information and knowledge about topics and lessons.

Problem-Solving Time:

As you get older, much of the work you do for school and beyond will involve problem-solving. You can practice your problem-solving skills now by thinking of a problem you frequently have. Some examples of a problem could be not having enough time to finish your homework or misplacing something important for school (like your notebooks, textbooks, etc.). After acknowledging a problem, write down at least five possible solutions to solve the problem. Make sure to think about what benefits each of the solutions you propose have toward solving your problem. Then, choose one solution and follow through with it for a semester!

Staying Positive:

As standardized tests begin, one way to prepare yourself is to remain positive about your abilities and skills to complete and do well on tests. Researchers have found that students who have positive opinions of their academic abilities are more likely to achieve compared with their peers who do not have such opinions. One way to begin the process of positive thinking is to engage in positive self-talk. The Mayo Clinic defines self-talk as “the endless stream of unspoken thoughts that run through your head.” Positive self-talk requires practice and will take time. To start off, practice self-talk by NOT saying anything negative about yourself. Instead, encourage and affirm your abilities and attributes. For example, instead of saying, “I can’t do this,” say, “I can give it a try” or “I can try to make it work.”



Practice Your Presentation Skills:

Did you know that giving a presentation, with a PowerPoint, video or with just your voice, is a helpful skill to have throughout your life? By presenting topics and ideas to other people, you can increase and develop your communication and research skills while gaining a better understanding of that topic. You can practice your presentation skills anytime by talking to your parent, sibling or friend about one topic or idea that you found interesting in class that day. Make sure you research your topic before doing the presentation. If you are feeling creative and have time to do so, you can create a short presentation with a PowerPoint or video to help explain your topic!





Eighth Grade

Do the Research:

As you enter eighth grade, you will be expected to be an independent thinker and use evidence to analyze and explain your thinking. One way to practice these skills is to conduct research on a topic or idea you are interested in. Start by asking a question about the topic or idea that you want to know more about. After you have a question, think about where the best place would be to get answers—you could use an encyclopedia or read some academic or news journals online. When looking up journals and articles online, make sure that they are from academic sources. Then, once you've gathered your sources, start to process the information. What did you find from looking at the articles online? Was there a common theme or pattern from your search? After you process your information, ask yourself, "Did you find an answer to your question?" "Was there something else missing?" After going through this process, present your findings to a teacher, friend or family member.

Collaboration and Listening Skills:

Learning to listen and collaborate with others is an important skill to have in life. When collaborating with others on a group task or project, it is important to ask yourself "How am I actively listening to others in a respectful way?" "How am I responding to other people's ideas in a positive way?" "How do I maintain positive relationships with my peers?" You can practice your collaboration and listening skills with your family and friends by asking them to talk about their interests or about their day. While they are talking, make sure to be aware of how you are listening and responding to them as they speak.

Time to Reflect:

The holiday season is a great time to recharge and think back about your semester. Taking time to reflect can help you recharge for the next semester, understand your goals and purpose for the upcoming year, make better decisions on how to move forward and face your fears. You can reflect by writing in a journal or talking with someone about how your last semester went and your hopes for the future. Start by asking yourself, “How do/did I feel about my classes, teachers and friends?” “Are there areas in school I can improve on?” “Are there things I am afraid of in the new year?”

Learning Responsibility:

Being responsible is an important skill to learn and develop in school and in life. You can develop this skill by meeting the goals, promises and expectations that you have set for yourself and that others ask from you. Did you complete the tasks that you have set out to do? If yes, great! If not, what obstacles prevented you from completing those tasks? Did you ask for help when completing the tasks? Remember that you can always ask others for help—doing so will help you become accountable and responsible for your goals and tasks.

Develop Your Test-Taking Skills:

As the end of the school year nears, managing your tests can be overwhelming! At least a week before your test, review what you know. This is the time to ask your teachers any questions you may still have about the topics. It is also important to learn how to manage your time during a timed test. Ask your teacher for some sample tests to get a sense

of how long each test takes you. On the day of the test, remember to relax and breathe—being relaxed will help you clear your mind of any distractions. Quickly look over the exam before answering the questions to get a sense of how it is structured. Make sure to read the instructions and each question carefully. If you can’t immediately provide an answer, skip the question and come back to it at the end. Once you have completed the test, go back to the beginning and check for errors. Another tip: During the test, do not think about how well you have answered the questions. This will make you more nervous about completing the test and you may run out of time.



Volunteer During the Summer:

Did you know that volunteering not only helps your local community, but it can also help you learn how to communicate and work with others? build develop communication and collaboration skills? Find an organization that has a cause or mission that you are interested in or passionate about and make some time during the summer to volunteer there. Take this opportunity to learn more about the organization and how your service can make an impact in your community,



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