



H2.

WHY COLLEGE? A BETTER FUTURE FOR OUR CHILDREN

INTRODUCTION

Participants will share why they feel higher education is important and consider what resources are needed to ensure that their children succeed in continuing their education after high school.

SETUP

For guidance with setup, see Community Conversations H1: *Looking Ahead — Expectations for Our Children’s Future*.

ACTIVITIES

Part 1: Welcome and Introductions

 10 minutes

For guidance with welcome and introductions, see Community Conversations H1: *Looking Ahead — Expectations for Our Children’s Future*.



TARGET AUDIENCE

Parents, guardians, friends, and mentors of students grades 4 through 8; possibly for the parents, guardians, friends and mentors of students grades 9 through 12



90 MINUTES



MATERIALS NEEDED

- Video: Online videos introducing information and resources, including videos on a variety of student experiences are available at <https://firstgen.ucdavis.edu/videos>
- Handouts: *Educational Journey*, *Why College? A Better Future for Our Children* and *The Benefits of Higher Education*

LEARNING GOALS

- ➔ Participants will discuss their own educational journey and its importance.
- ➔ Participants will discuss the benefits of higher education.
- ➔ Participants will consider the following questions in a group discussion:
 - Why is college important for your child’s future success?
 - Why is it important for you to educate yourself about the process involved in going to college?
 - What can your child’s school do to support this process?
 - Where and to whom can you turn for support in helping you help your children through the college search and admissions process?

Part 2: Opening Discussions

 20 minutes

Group Discussion:

- ➔ Provide the *Educational Journey* handout to participants and walk them through the exercise. Have parents choose a partner — preferably someone they do not know well or at all rather than a spouse — and have them take 5 minutes to ask each other the following questions:
 - What messages did you receive, both positive and negative, about your ability and potential to go to college or further your education?
 - What high school preparation did you receive?
 - Did you or your family have any say in that preparation, including choosing schools, courses and teachers?
 - Who was or will be the first in your family to attend college?
- ➔ Once participants have finished sharing in pairs, ask if any of them feel comfortable answering the following questions within the larger group:
 - Were there any surprises in your partner’s education journey?
 - What messages do you think your children are receiving at school, in the community and at home?

Part 3: Video Screening

 25 minutes

- ➔ Play one of the online videos detailing student experience at <https://firstgen.ucdavis.edu/videos>, or select any video you can find covering the importance of higher education and how parents can support their children. If screening a video is not possible, have guest speakers come in to talk about their educational experiences. Potential guest speakers include community leaders, business leaders and college students.
- ➔ Distribute the *Why College? A Better Future for Our Children* handout and have parents complete it.

Part 4: Group Discussion about the Video

 20 minutes

- ➔ Have participants share their thoughts and feelings about the video they just watched.
- ➔ Have parents continue to fill out the *Why College? A Better Future for Our Children* handout and begin to facilitate conversation by using its questions as a guiding tool.
 - Why is college important for your child’s future success?
 - Why is it important for you to educate yourself about the process involved in going to college?



- What can your child’s school do to support this process?
- Where and to whom can you turn for support in helping your children through the college search and admissions process?

- ➔ As the facilitator, feel free to make connections to previous discussions or points made by participants and ask for clarification or examples.

As you facilitate these discussions, you may wish to capture responses by having someone take notes on butcher paper or poster board or by collecting a note-taker’s personal notes. Later, you may be able to use this information to prepare a handout for your school or program to provide to participating families.

Part 5: Distribution of Resources and Information

⌚ 10 minutes

- ➔ Thank participants for sharing their thoughts and recommendations.
- ➔ Distribute *The Benefits of Higher Education* handout and review it with participants.
- ➔ Give participants a few moments to review the handout on their own
- ➔ Ask them to identify which of the points covered in the handout have already been raised in discussion.
- ➔ Review points in the handout that have not been covered in discussion. You can do this by reading from the handout yourself or asking someone to read them for you.

Part 6: Closing

⌚ 5 minutes

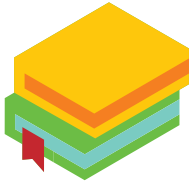
- ➔ If your school or program is conducting this session concurrently with the *Believing the College Dream* student curriculum, this may be a good time to inform participants of the topics students are covering in class and encourage them to ask their children about what they are learning in school.
- ➔ Ask participants if they have any final thoughts.
- ➔ Thank participants for their presence and participation.
- ➔ Inform participants of the date and location of the next Community Conversations gathering.

RESOURCES

- ➔ ECMC Student Resources
 - <https://www.ecmc.org/students/student-resources.html>
- ➔ College Board
 - <https://www.collegeboard.org/>
- ➔ California Colleges
 - <https://www.californiacolleges.edu/>
- ➔ U.S. Department of Education Parent Resources
 - <https://www2.ed.gov/parents/landing.jhtml>



HANDOUT: EDUCATIONAL JOURNEY



NAME	
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Break into groups of two people. Take 5 minutes each to ask each other the questions below. Be prepared to share your partner's educational journey with the group.

1. What messages did you receive, both positive and negative, about your ability and potential to go to college or further your education?

2. What high school preparation did you receive?

3. Did you or your family have any say in that preparation, including choosing schools, courses and teachers?

4. Who was or will be the first in your family to attend college?

5. Was there anything surprising about your partner's educational journey?

6. What messages do you think your children are receiving at school, in the community and at home?

HANDOUT: WHY COLLEGE? A BETTER FUTURE FOR OUR CHILDREN



NAME

1. What do you think are the benefits of college?

2. How do you think going to college will affect your child's future?

3. How could continuing your own education affect your family's future?

4. Why is college important for your child's future success?

5. Why is it important for you to educate yourself about the process involved in going to college?

6. What can your child's school do to support this process?

7. Where and to whom can you turn for support in helping your children through the college search and admissions process?

HANDOUT: THE BENEFITS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The advantages of continuing education beyond high school have long been researched and established. Some of the advantages include:

INTELLECTUAL

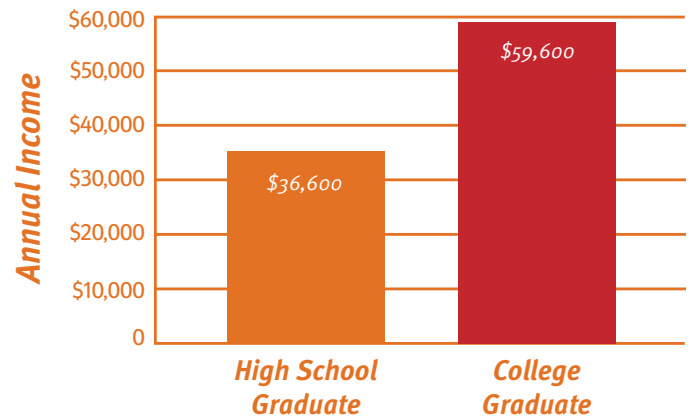
- Exposure to exciting new ideas and areas of study
- Increased skills in reading, writing, math and analysis
- Opportunities to work alongside professors doing cutting-edge research
- Ability to increase knowledge of the world, different cultures and your own, and career options

DEVELOPMENTAL

- Increase in maturity and independence due to having total responsibility for an academic career
- Tolerance of differences due to being exposed to a vast array of cultures, philosophies and ways of life
- Experience with a wide variety of student activities, including the opportunity to tutor, mentor and study in another country
- Development of skills for successfully transitioning to adulthood and the world of work

FINANCIAL

- Exposure to career and life experiences through internships and fellowships
- Increase in earning capacity:
 - A four-year college graduate earns almost \$1 million more over his or her lifetime than a high school graduate.
 - The average annual income of a four-year college graduate is about \$59,600, compared to the average annual income of \$36,600 for a high school graduate.
- Better working conditions, including longer job tenure, more on-the-job training opportunities and more responsibility and promotion opportunities.



EXTENSIONS

- ➔ You may wish to incorporate or present information from the “Getting Involved and Staying Involved” section of the *Realizing the College Dream* curriculum guide (Section C), which is a free download available at: <https://www.ecmc.org/students/educator-resources.html>.

NOTES

