

PARENT NEWSLETTER

April 2013

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the GEAR UP Parent’s News Letter! The goal is to send you information every month or 6 weeks to help you help your child finish high school and move on to post-secondary education.

Review your child’s courses for freshman year of high school. The Michigan Merit Curriculum mandates the following requirements for high school graduation, according to <http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/New_MMC_one_pager_11.15.06_183755_7.pdf>

Make sure your child is scheduled to take the courses they need to graduate on time.

Mathematics 4 credits English Language Arts 4 credits

 Algebra I English Language Arts 9

 Algebra II English Language Arts 10

 Geometry English Language Arts 11

 One additional course senior year English Language Arts 12

Science 3 credits Social Studies 3 credits

 Biology .5 credit I Civics

 Physics or Chemistry .5 credit in Economics

 One additional science course US History and Geography

 World History and Geography

Physical Education & Health 1 credit Language Other than English 2 credits

Visual, Performing and Applied Arts 1 credit Online Learning Experience



\*\*\* HAVE YOU RETURNED YOUR PAPERWORK FOR EXPLORATION SENSATION?\*\*\*

Make sure your child has returned all paperwork to Mrs. Talsma or Mr. Erickson so they can go on the college visit to Lake Superior State University on May 9.

**Nutrition: **

By Rachel DeRosie, Future Faculty Fellow at NMU.

One of the biggest issues facing parents and children today is outside the school curriculum: food. Rates of heart disease and diabetes in children are growing at an alarming pace, but luckily, it is something that is relatively easy to fix. According to a report by National Public Radio:

One of the biggest mistakes parents make is assuming they know what their children eat… According to the poll, 87 percent of parents report their children are eating healthfully. But do parents really know what their kids — especially older kids — are eating?

Not according to high school senior Felix Pieske, from Portland, Maine.

"Middle school might have been the last time that I really talked to my parents about like, 'Oh, what did you eat today?'” he says. (NPR)

These unhealthy eating trends have many consequences for children, but are easy for parents to prevent. Talk to your son or daughter about what they eat when they are at school, sporting events, or visiting friends. Experiment and find out what they like and have healthy snacks available for them to have both at home, and to take to school.

It may seem like a small thing in the larger scheme of issues your child will face in High School, but it provides the opportunity to create a positive dialogue with your son or daughter about something we all do three or more times a day: eat!

Williams, Chantel. “Do Parents Really Know What Their Kids are Eating?”. *National Public Radio.* 27 Feb. 2013. Web. 14 Apr. 2013.

 

**Helping your child study: **

By Rachel DeRosie, Future Faculty Fellow at NMU

The first step is to talk with your child about their school work. The key word there is “talk”—the less stressful the conversation, the better. They shouldn’t feel as though they are being punished, which makes the homework/test anxiety worse than it already is. Your son or daughter has been in school all day, and when they get home, let’s face it, the last thing they want to do is work on more school work. That is why it is important to find some kind of routine that works for you and your child—if they see that study time is important enough for you to take time out of your busy life to do, then they will assign more importance to it as well.

In her work titled, “Helping Your Child with Organization and Study Skills” Joan Sedita says: “Routines about when and where homework is completed are essential. While students will not usually admit to it, they all benefit from structure for completing homework. This is especially relevant for students with learning disabilities” (Sedita).

Between jobs, laundry, sports, dinner, etc. our lives are really busy, but taking a half an hour every night to sit down with your son or daughter and go over their schoolwork is about so much more than homework: you will have a window into how they are doing in school, and also how they are doing in general. It gives you a chance to talk. At this age young people begin to feel that they cannot talk to their parents—that no one understands what they are going through. This can be a very scary time for both parents and children. The connections built in childhood are stretched and change as the young person begins the transformation into adulthood. They want independence, but also need to know that you—their parents—are still there.

Teaching your child organizational skills is essential to helping them study and do well in school. If their supplies are a mess and they can never find what they need, they will become frustrated. A separate notebook and binder for each class—preferably color-coded for easy retrieval from backpacks and desks is very helpful.

High School can be hard for both parents and children. Make routines, work together, and keep the conversation going.

Sedita, Joan. “Helping Your Child with Organization and Study Skills”. *LD Online.* 1999. Web. 14 April. 2013.

**Communicating with your child:**

By Shirley Brozzo, Associate Director of the Multicultural Education & Resource Center, and GEAR UP Coordinator at NMU.

If you ever find yourself having a difficult time talking with your child, here are a few tips that might help.

* Watch your tone of voice. Talk with your student, not at him/her. They will show you respect if you teach them how it is done.
* Expect them to push back or ask why you made your decision. Take the time to explain.
* When the answer is a definite no, leave it at that. Some things are not negotiable.
* Pick the right moment to have important discussions. Are you ready to discuss dating, later curfews or grandma’s illness.
* At dinnertime ask them to tell you one new thing they learned today.
* Listen.

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Preparing your child for life:

By Shirley Brozzo

If you haven’t already done so, now is a good time to teach your students the life skills they will need.

* Do they know how to sort laundry, run the washer, use the dryer, and hang up their own clothes?
* Can they make simple meals? Read a recipe? Follow instructions on a box or bag?
* Are they able to sew on a button, mend a tear, or shorten a pair of pants?
* If they are allowed on the Internet, do they understand how to keep themselves safe?
* Can they write out a check and handle a check register?

Would you like GEAR UP representatives to conduct workshops to show your child (or you) how to do some of these things? If so, contact us at 906-227-1554.