

THE COUNSELOR'S CLASSROOM

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PREPARING COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS FOR THE NON-ACADEMIC LIFE OF COLLEGE

By Julia Taylor, MA of the [American School Counselor Association](#) for [GuidanceChannel.com](#)

*“You have brains in your head.
You have feet in your shoes.
You can steer yourself any direction you choose.
You're on your own.
And you know what you know.
And YOU are the one who'll decide where to go.”*

Dr. Seuss' "Oh the Places You'll Go" offers a great deal of wisdom to everyone facing transitions, especially those college-bound seniors entering a new, exciting, and sometimes frightening stage in their lives. The high level of uncertainty can make this time particularly tumultuous for teens. As a result, college-bound seniors often experience a flood of emotions.

While most school counselors and parents have spent four years preparing students for the academic challenges inherent in college, many overlook the challenges involved with the non-academic life. However, many students aren't concerned about their academic studies, but rather about their future social scene. College-bound students worry about leaving home, losing old friends and making new ones, getting homesick, becoming independent, preparing their schedules, managing their time, dealing with alcohol, and/or relationship issues.

School counselors can provide a wealth of information to address these concerns. Below you will find practical suggestions and resources to help students make the social transition associated with college life.

1. Bring in a panel of alumni to have a question and answer session to seniors. This could be a brown bag lunch session where seniors have the opportunity to discuss their fears

and concerns with former students who faced the same issues.

2. Start a counseling group that focuses on the non-academic life of college. It could be a non-structured group targeting the following issues: preparing for the move, adjusting to increased independence and freedom, getting along with roommates, avoiding drugs and alcohol, accessing campus resources, staying healthy, and/or building healthy relationships.

3. Host a parent education evening to help anxious parents. (It's common for parents to be more worried than their students!)

4. Bring in a local university official to discuss involvement on campus. Many times students are unaware of all of their options when first arriving to their destination. Just like high school, colleges and universities have numerous clubs, intramural sports, fitness centers, campus movies, and various support centers that all students can join. Introducing students to these opportunities can help them to make friends and connections outside of their dormitories.

5. Encourage parents and students to visit the college again to help students become more familiar with their new home.

6. If the university can accommodate them, advise students to arrange an overnight trip where they can experience the campus with other students.

7. Meet individually with college bound seniors to address their non-academic concerns.

8. With permission, give students the contact information of alumni attending the same university.

Online Resources

[A Guide to Transition from High School to College](#)

(A great resource for students with disabilities)

[College Transition Programs: Promoting Success Beyond High School](#)

[Dr. Mom's Guide to College](#)

[Facts On Tap](#)

[High School \(Senior\)/College Transition Program](#)

[How is College Different from High School?](#)

[Information for High School Students...College Transition](#)

[Making the Transition from High School to College](#)

[Transition from High School to College](#)

[The Transition to College](#)

[The Not-the-13th-Grade Page](#)

[Ten Tips You Need to Survive College](#)

[Your First Year of College: 25 Tips to Help You Survive and Thrive Your Freshman Year and Beyond](#)

FEATURED RESOURCE: DREAM CATCHERS CAREER AND EDUCATION AWARENESS SET



Persuading young people to recognize the importance of continuing their education beyond high school is essential. This high-interest career awareness program reinforces the importance of higher education by helping students to understand what it takes to make their dreams come through. A set of 10 workbooks assist groups of students to explore what types of careers they are interested in, determine what their skills are, and realize what they need to do to get there. An accompanying Activity Book includes more than 80 hands-on, reproducible supplemental activities that extend learning and an additional Teacher's Guide offers lesson plans for each activity, as well.

To find out how you can purchase this resource for developing career and educational awareness in students in grades 5-9, [click here](#) !

ABOUT GUIDANCECHANNEL.COM

[GuidanceChannel.com](#), a brand of [Sunburst Visual Media](#), is an online portal that offers newsletters and an online magazine including insightful articles, thought-provoking interviews, tips website reviews, and other content that addresses the social, emotional, and educational issues facing today's youth. We are an educational publishing company that develops award-winning guidance and health videos, DVDs games, activity books, curricula, pamphlets and print materials for the K-12 school market.

For over 30 years, Sunburst Visual Media has been producing the highest quality guidance and health programs. From the start, Sunburst Visual Media's mission has been to enhance learning and help teachers get students thinking and talking about the difficult

issues they face every day. Sunburst Visual Media's reputation as the recognized leader in the field of guidance and health, is built on its ability to present tough-to-teach topics in a realistic, non-judgmental, and captivating manner. Sunburst Visual Media's prides itself on consistently providing educators with award-winning programs in such areas as: anger management, bullying and harassment, character education, violence prevention, conflict resolution, drug abuse prevention, sex education, career education, health, and parenting skills.

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ABOUT JULIA TAYLOR, MA

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ABOUT THE AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION

Professional school counselors everywhere share the same vision to support their schools by serving their students. School counselors know that guiding students toward personal and social development leads to improved academic achievement. Through their partnership with principals and teachers, school counselors help prepare today's students to become tomorrow's adults.

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) responds to school counselors' unique needs, helping them grow individually as professionals and providing them with real tools to guide their students. As an international nonprofit organization founded in 1952, ASCA has the benefit of foresight and hindsight. It has grown to fit counselors' changing needs through social and educational movements from desegregation to standardized testing. Responding to the needs of counselors as voiced by counselors has enabled ASCA to remain vital and forward-thinking.

ASCA serves as the voice of school counselors on Capitol Hill and helps members ensure their voices are heard in state legislatures. ASCA has active government affairs representatives who monitor activities in Congress, the Department of Education and throughout Washington to advocate on behalf of school counselors' interests: funding, certification, student-to-counselor ratios and more.

A full-color bimonthly magazine, *School Counselor* provides practical information and how-to articles to help school counselors help their students and themselves. Each issue has a focus on something school counselors care about, from public relations to grief counseling, as well as departments and columns covering a range of topics. Professional School Counseling is ASCA's award-winning bimonthly academic journal, providing peer-reviewed articles on school counseling theory, research, practice and techniques. The journal and the magazine together provide counselors with the most well-rounded

and up-to-date information in the field.

For more information, visit <http://www.schoolcounselor.org/> or call 703.683.ASCA.

FOR ADDITIONAL NEWSLETTERS...

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