

College Prep & Connect - Parent Guide

Walking With Your Student Through College, Career, and Calling

College is one of the most important transitions in your student's life—not only academically, but spiritually, socially, and vocationally. **College Prep & Connect** is designed to help parents walk alongside their student with clarity and confidence—guiding conversations around identity, career direction, college fit, and Christian community. This guide provides a simple, step-by-step pathway you can use together to support wise, faith-anchored decisions.



Parent Guide

Getting Started

Before discussing specific colleges or majors, it's important to start with **clarity around who your student is and where they may be headed**. These two short setup steps create a shared foundation that makes every conversation that follows more focused, efficient, and less stressful.

Step A: Take the 3-Minute Assessment

Have your student complete the short assessment to discover how they are wired—their strengths, preferences, and natural tendencies.

When students understand their wiring:

- Career conversations become clearer
- Majors narrow more naturally
- College choices align better
- Stress and unnecessary course changes are reduced

This assessment is designed to *open conversation*, not lock your student into a path.

Step B: Create a Student Dashboard Account

Create a Student Dashboard Account so your student can:

- Save assessment results
- Return to tools over time
- Explore at their own pace
- Maintain privacy while still allowing guided discussion

This dashboard becomes your student's **home base** as you walk through the College Prep & Connect process together.

Once These Two Steps Are Complete...

You're ready to move through the **five-step journey**—from identity to vocation, college fit, Christian community, and arriving at college supported.

Step-by-Step Guide

Step 1: Understand How Your Student Is Wired

Goal: Build clarity by starting with identity before decisions. Help your student discover how they're naturally wired—their strengths, preferences, and energy patterns.

Action Steps

- Have your student take the **3-Minute Assessment**
- Review results together
- Discuss strengths, preferences, and areas of growth

Parent Conversation Starters

- “What feels most true about this?”
- “Where do you feel energized or drained?”
- “How does this explain past experiences?”

Starting with identity builds clarity before college decisions begin.

Step 2: Explore Career Paths - Start With the End in Mind

Goal: Help your student gain early clarity about possible career direction so college decisions are more focused and cost-effective. When students have a clearer sense of where they may be headed vocationally, they are more likely to choose an aligned major sooner, avoid unnecessary changes, and complete college in four years. These Career Insights tools encourage exploration without pressure and have been validated and used by over 2 million people.

Action Steps

- Review best-fit career paths together
- Discuss interests, purpose, and possible callings
- Explore social impact, vocational, or ministry-related paths if relevant

Parent Conversation Starters

- “What kind of problems do you enjoy solving?”
- “What work feels meaningful to you right now?”
- “What paths are worth exploring—not deciding—at this stage?”

Clearer direction now leads to smarter college choices later.

Step 3: Review College Options

Goal: Identify college environments where your student can thrive. Focus on **fit**, not rankings—academic, relational, spiritual, and personal.

Action Steps

- Walk through the **College Fit Guide** together
- Review majors that align with your student's direction
- Discuss learning style, structure, support, faith, and community

Parent Conversation Starters

- “Where do you think you'd feel most supported?”
- “What kind of environment helps you grow?”
- “How important is faith community in daily college life?”

This step narrows options and reduces unnecessary changes later.

Step 4: Check Out Ministries & Churches at Colleges

Goal: Turn college ideas into real, faith-informed options. This step builds on your student's preliminary college list and introduces Christian community as a key decision factor.

Action Steps

- Create an **Every Student Sent** account with your student
- Research colleges your student is considering
- Look for:
 - On-campus ministries
 - Nearby churches
 - Christian fellowships that align with your student's interests

Parent Conversation Starters

- “What kind of Christian community would help you thrive?”
- “Which schools seem to have strong faith support?”
- “How important is this to you as you think about college?”

This step helps faith become part of the decision—not an afterthought.

Step 5: Connect to Ministries, Churches, & Friends

Goal: Help your student arrive supported—not alone. Encourage early connection so your student begins college with relationships already forming.

Action Steps

- Encourage outreach to campus ministry leaders
- Join online groups or interest areas before move-in
- Help your student connect with:
 - Future friends
 - Study partners
 - Potential roommates

Parent Conversation Starters

- “Who could you reach out to this month?”
- “What kind of community would help you feel grounded?”
- “How can we support you taking this step?”

Early connection reduces isolation and strengthens faith during transition.

A Final Word for Parents

Your role isn't to have all the answers—it's to create space for discovery, reflection, and prayerful conversation.

This journey works best when you:

- Listen more than you direct
- Encourage exploration over pressure
- Revisit tools as your student grows

College Prep & Connect helps families move forward together with **clarity, direction, and Christian community**.

Optional Step: Service & Justice Calling

Goal: Help your student understand *how* they are uniquely wired to serve and live out their faith.

This step helps students identify:

- Best-fit service projects
- Justice engagement opportunities
- Mission experiences aligned with their strengths, energy, and calling