

## Activity #44: Learning About the ACT Assessment

1. Ask your student to check with a guidance counselor to determine if the colleges he/she has selected require this test for admission.
2. If so, discuss this information with your student.

### What Is the ACT Assessment?

The American College Test or ACT Assessment is another national college admission examination that consists of tests in English, math, reading, and science reasoning. The ACT includes 215 multiple-choice questions and takes approximately three hours and thirty minutes to complete. The questions are directly related to what students have learned in high school.

### Dates of the Test

The ACT is administered on five national test dates in October, December, February, April, and June. The registration fee in Florida is \$26. Students can obtain a copy of the Student Registration Form from their school guidance office and follow the registration instructions.

### Fee Waivers

Take Stock students are eligible for fee waivers. Information about fee waivers is mailed each fall to every high school. Fee waivers cover only the basic registration fee, including up to four college choices. Waivers do not cover test dates, test center changes, or any other fees. Funds are limited. To use a fee waiver, you must register by paper folder. **Contact your guidance counselor for more information.**

### Test Day

Students will need the following on test day:

1. Test center admission ticket, if student is registered for a national test center.
2. Acceptable identification. Admission tickets are not acceptable.
3. Three sharpened #2 pencils with erasers. Do not bring pens or highlighters.
4. A wristwatch to pace yourself; no alarms allowed.

## Activity #45: Preparing for the ACT Assessment

1. Discuss this information with your student if he/she wishes to take the ACT.
2. Ask a counselor for more information about preparation resources if your student wants extra help.
3. Use the ACT web site for additional information and resources.
4. Encourage your student to have a preparation plan for the ACT Assessment, which includes deadlines and things to do.

### How to Prepare for the Test

1. Familiarize yourself with the content of the ACT tests.
2. Refresh your knowledge and skills in the content areas.
3. Identify the content areas you have not studied.

### Test Preparation Resources

1. The Real ACT Prep Guide can be purchased for \$19.95. This online tool offers many resources, including practice tests.
2. Go to [www.act.org](http://www.act.org) for test prep information.

### Test-Taking Tips

1. Carefully read the instructions on the cover of the test booklet.
2. Read the directions for each test carefully. Pace yourself.
3. Don't spend too much time on an individual question.
4. Read each question carefully.
5. Answer easy questions first.
6. Answer every question. There is no penalty for guessing.

### Other Resources

PLAN is a pre-ACT test that many schools administer in the fall of students' sophomore year. Mentors can check with the school guidance office for more information on PLAN. PLAN is a comprehensive guidance resource that is highly recommended.

## MODULE 3: PREPARING FOR COLLEGE

### Activity #46: Ten Advantages of a Community College

The majority of Take Stock in Children students will attend a community college after high school. Here are a few key points you can discuss with your student to help him/her become aware of all the advantages of a community college.

1. **Individual Instruction.** Community colleges generally have good faculty/student ratios. Smaller class sizes mean more personalized instruction—students have more opportunities to ask questions, get to know instructors, and receive special help.
2. **Cost-Efficiency.** Students who attend a community college generally can live at home; this can save them a great deal of money.
3. **Personal Development.** A community college provides many opportunities for students to develop leadership abilities as well as scholastic and social capabilities in a more relaxed, less competitive environment.
4. **Flexible Schedules.** Most community colleges offer courses at various times to accommodate students' work schedules.
5. **Transfer Capability.** Community colleges offer university parallel courses that readily transfer to a senior college or university.
6. **Guidance.** Community colleges also have guidance personnel who are trained to address non-traditional students' needs and problems.
7. **Special Assistance.** Community colleges provide many special services for non-traditional students.
8. **Comprehensive Programs.** Community colleges usually offer a wide range of programs that enable students to select those that are appropriate to their interests and abilities.
9. **Technical Education.** Community colleges specialize in providing students with quality vocational and technical education programs.
10. **Convenience.** Community colleges are very convenient for students because there is usually one located within driving distance of home.

### Activity #47: Questions You Should Ask About a College

1. These questions will help focus students' research and enable them to make objective and accurate comparisons of colleges.
2. They can direct these questions to their guidance counselor, to the college admissions office, or use the college web site to find the answers themselves.
3. Students can use the College Comparison Worksheet on the next page to record important information.

#### Questions to Ask About Your College:

1. Are there any special requirements for admission?
2. What test and what minimum scores does the school require?
3. Is there an admission interview?
4. How do I prepare for the interview?
5. How much does it cost to attend school for one year?
6. What types of financial assistance can I expect?
7. How selective is the school?
8. What is the ratio of faculty to students in most classes?
9. What sort of advisement and counseling may I expect?
10. What is the ratio of men to women?
11. Are most students entering directly from high school, junior college, or returning to complete their education?
12. What are the school's strongest majors and areas of specialization?
13. How many students attend the school?
14. What resources are available to students?
15. What extracurricular activities are available?

## Activity #48: How to Compare Colleges

If your student wants more college information, have him or her use the "Finding the Right College" page on the College Board web site: [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

### COLLEGE COMPARISON WORKSHEET

<b>COLLEGE NAME</b>			
<b>TYPE</b> (COMMUNITY COLLEGE, 4 YEAR, TECHNICAL)			
<b>SIZE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrollment</li> <li>• Size of campus</li> </ul>			
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban</li> <li>• Rural</li> <li>• Co-ed</li> <li>• Male</li> <li>• Female</li> <li>• Religious affiliation</li> </ul>			
<b>ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deadline</li> <li>• Tests required</li> <li>• Average test scores</li> <li>• Average GPA</li> <li>• Average Rank of student</li> <li>• Special requirements</li> <li>• Notification</li> </ul>			
<b>ACADEMICS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your major offered</li> <li>• Special requirements</li> <li>• Accreditation</li> <li>• Student-faculty ratio</li> <li>• Typical class size</li> </ul>			
<b>EXPENSES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuition</li> <li>• Room and Board</li> <li>• Estimated total budget</li> <li>• Application fee</li> </ul>			
<b>FINANCIAL AID</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deadline</li> <li>• Required forms</li> <li>• % receiving aid</li> <li>• Scholarships</li> </ul>			
<b>Housing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability</li> <li>• Food plan</li> <li>• Types</li> </ul>			
<b>FACILITIES</b>			
<b>ACTIVITIES</b>			

## Activity #49: Preparing for a Campus Visit

1. Urge your student to visit as many colleges as possible.
2. Your student can get the most out of a campus visit by having a plan.
3. Review the information on this page with your student and make certain he/she is aware of the reasons for a campus visit.
4. There are two ways to make a campus visit: unprepared and prepared.
5. The first is simply to travel to the school, tour the campus, and then return home.
6. The second is to prepare for the visit by formulating a plan that enables a student to answer all the key questions he/she has identified.
7. Here are a few things that students can do during their campus visits.

### 1. **Contact the College Admissions Officer**

College admissions personnel can give you current information on all the major questions you may have about: admission requirements, financial aid, tutors and other student resources, and important deadlines.

### 2. **Contact Friends or Student Representatives at the School**

These informal contacts can answer more practical questions:

1. Are the dorms quiet?
2. Where are the best places to study?
3. Is there too much partying here?
4. Are faculty accessible or aloof?
5. Why did you pick this school?
6. Does it meet your expectations?

### 3. **Try to Verify Costs**

1. How much do food, tuition, and other items really cost?
2. Gather as much information about expenses as possible from college officials.

### 4. **Check to see if the college has a career development service.**

1. How much will your school do to advance your career after college?
2. Students need to ask for evidence that the college will help them enter a career.

### 5. **How will this school help me achieve my goals?**