

# THE NEXT STEPS PROJECT

## Gameplan Template

In the left column, check the box for anything you're planning to do in the next couple years. For every box you check, the column on the right will tell you which sections of this packet to complete.

I PLAN TO:	COMPLETE:
<input type="checkbox"/> Attend 2-year/community college <input type="checkbox"/> Attend 2-year/community college, then transfer to 4-year university <input type="checkbox"/> Enroll right away in a 4-year university <input type="checkbox"/> Attend a different kind of college	Go To College (pages 3-5)
<input type="checkbox"/> Go into workforce training program (e.g. police academy, JobCorps, vocational rehabilitation, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Find an apprenticeship, internship, or other work training that is not program-based	Get Training (pages 6-7) & Money Management (pages 12-13)
<input type="checkbox"/> Get a full-time job (40+ hours per week) <input type="checkbox"/> Get a part-time job (Under 40 hours per week) <input type="checkbox"/> Get a job simultaneously with a postsecondary program (e.g. will have a work-study job at college)	Go to Work (page 8-12)
<input type="checkbox"/> Do a gap/service year (e.g. CityYear, NCCC, AmeriCorps State/National, etc.)	Take a Gap Year (page 13) & Money Management (pages 12-13)
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	With your coach, figure out which sections to complete 😊

Why are you planning to take these steps—what is your larger plan? Where do you want to be in the next 5-10 years (living where, doing what for a living, etc.)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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<b>TAKE A GAP YEAR</b>	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
Research	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Apply	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Plan: Now & After	Error! Bookmark not defined.

# Go to College

## Choose Your Institution

What college or institution are you planning to attend?

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{name of school/institution}

{where it is located}

Why are you planning to go there? *There's no "right answer" to this question; it's just an opportunity for you to think about what that school/institution has to offer you, and whether it's your best fit.*

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## Course of Study

What program or major will you be entering? \_\_\_\_\_

What are the prerequisites to study that? Do you need any classes or certifications beyond your high school diploma to enter that program or major, and if so, how will you complete them? \_\_\_\_\_

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How will you know that you've completed this program or major?

- I will receive a certificate/certification (Name of Certificate: \_\_\_\_\_)
- I will receive a diploma (Circle one: GED, Associate's, Bachelor's, Other \_\_\_\_\_)
- I will transfer to another institution (Circle one: 4-year college/university, Other \_\_\_\_\_)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Will you be studying:

Full-time

Part-time

How long will it take to complete your course of study? Start date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_ Graduation date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

## Affording College & Financial Aid

TUITION | How much will *tuition* (the price for taking classes) *cost per term* at your college? \$ \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER COSTS | Your college will probably have mandatory costs for attendance in addition to tuition, such as textbooks and/or additional fees. Research what fees will apply to you and fill in the chart:

Other Costs	Price per term
On-Campus Housing + Housing Deposit	\$ _____
Board/Cafeteria Plan or On-Campus Meals	\$ _____
Books & Other Course Materials	\$ _____
Parking permit or shuttle fee	\$ _____
Technology (personal laptop and/or computer lab access, equipment rental, etc.)	\$ _____
Health Care	\$ _____
Enrollment & Registration	\$ _____
Other Fees	\$ _____
Add all columns together for total <i>other costs per term</i> :	\$ _____

Add together both the prices you just found, to estimate how much college will cost *each term*.

$$\frac{\text{_____}}{\{\text{tuition cost per term}\}} + \frac{\text{_____}}{\{\text{other costs per term}\}} = \frac{\text{_____}}{\{\text{total cost per term}\}}$$

Now multiply your answer by # of terms you will spend in college, to find *total cost of attendance (a)*.

$$\frac{\text{_____}}{\{\text{total cost per term}\}} \times \frac{\text{_____}}{\{\text{total \# of terms you will spend}\}} = \frac{\text{_____}}{\{\text{total cost of attendance}\}}$$

FINANCIAL AID | Are you getting any financial support to afford this total cost? Examples include scholarships, grants, IDA savings, contributions from family members, income from your past or future jobs, and loans.

Type of Support	Amount of money offered
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
Add all columns together for <i>total financial support (b)</i> :	\$ _____

Does your *total financial support (b)* cover the *total cost of attendance (a)*?

$$(a) \$ \frac{\text{_____}}{\{\text{total cost of attendance}\}} - (b) \$ \frac{\text{_____}}{\{\text{total financial support}\}} = \$ \frac{\text{_____}}{\{\text{money you need to find}\}}$$

LIVING EXPENSES | The final step to affording college will be figuring out a stable and affordable living situation that supports your academic goals.

- If you'll be commuting from home, what will your form(s) of transportation be? Can you afford this in terms of money, time, and energy? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- If you're moving away from home, does your college have dorms?  Yes  No
  - If so, can you pay for them with financial aid or work-study jobs?  Yes  No
  - If not, do you have other housing options that are safe, affordable, and close enough to school (ideally within walking distance)?  Yes  No
  
- Will you be able to afford enough healthy groceries?  Yes  No
  - If not, is there assistance available (e.g. on-campus meals, EBT "food stamps," help from family or friends)?  Yes  No
  
- Are all your medical expenses covered?  Yes  No
- Will you have enough spare cash for other necessities like shampoo, etc.?  Yes  No

*If you answered "no" to any of these questions, it is strongly recommended that you complete a budget (page 12) to help you make ends meet and prevent an emergency.*

## Visit & Apply

Before you invest time and money in a college, take some time to think through whether it's a good fit for you, and whether it will be able to support you through any challenges you may face. Does this institution have academic programs that match your interests, plans, and strengths? Do they have academic or disability support services that you'll need? Will the social scene there be comfortable and fulfilling for you?

Make a list of needs & questions that you have for a college, and bring it with you on a campus visit. If you can't visit the campus physically, don't worry! Do an "informational visit": work with your coach to find a contact at the college who could best answer your questions, and call or email them.

When did you visit? \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

When did you apply? \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

What did you learn/ask about? \_\_\_\_\_

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# Get Training

*Some occupations don't require a college degree, but will need additional training beyond your high school diploma/GED.*

*Depending on the career you're pursuing, this training could look like entering an occupational program (such as JobCorps or the Firefighter Training Academy), finding an apprenticeship (on-the-job training from a skilled worker or journeyman in your chosen trade), or an internship (making connections and gaining skills while doing entry-level work for a company or group).*

What kind of training will you pursue, and where? \_\_\_\_\_

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How much will it cost to participate, and how will you pay? \_\_\_\_\_

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What are the qualifications/prerequisites to do this, and how will you meet them? \_\_\_\_\_

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*Is this training resource qualified to prepare you for your career? Some for-profit colleges and career institutes simply make money off of its students by taking their tuition money, but not providing a quality education that qualifies students for their careers. This is very dangerous because it puts students into thousands of dollars in debt, but they cannot find employment after graduation to pay off that debt or their basic living expenses.*

Do some research on your training program. Is it "for-profit"?  Yes  No

Find out what the job placement rate is for students who finish that program. Do most of the graduates find employment after completing the program?  Yes  No

Is it a residential program (will you live there)?

Yes  No

If not, where will you live? \_\_\_\_\_

Will you have safe and affordable transportation from home to your training center?

How will you pay for your other essential living expenses (food, hygiene, etc.)—will you earn wages while you train, or do you have an alternate source of income? \_\_\_\_\_

If you can estimate your future earnings, it's *strongly* recommended that you complete a budget (see page 12).

How will you know when you've completed your training? \_\_\_\_\_

When will that be (month/year)? \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

What will you do then—how are you going to use your training? What job will you look for, and where? \_\_\_\_\_

# Go to Work

## Résumé / Activity Log

The 1<sup>st</sup> step to getting a good job is to keep track of employment, volunteering, and other extracurricular activities you've done that might have given you skills/experience which potential employers should know about.

If you already have a résumé, print a copy out and attach it to this packet. If you don't, fill out the "activity log" and keep a copy for yourself. It's ok to leave 1 or 2 categories blank if you don't have anything to put down, but you should fill in at least 5. You can also add plans for the future, if you're struggling: for example, volunteering is a good way to get skills, experience, and networks, so you could write down a volunteer commitment that you'll make next year. If you're confused, check out the sample résumé on the last page.

*\*Alternative assignment: create a free LinkedIn account at [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com), fill out your profile completely, and send a Connection invite to your coach, your mentor, and the Next Steps coordinator.*

### Education & Training

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{school/institution}	{degree/certificate received}	{when}
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{school/institution}	{degree/certificate received}	{when}
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### Extracurricular Activities

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{what}	{where}	{when}
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{what}	{where}	{when}
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{what}	{where}	{when}
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## Work & Volunteer Experience

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{what you did}                                  {who you did it for}                                  {month/year you started—month/year you left}

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{what you did}                                  {who you did it for}                                  {month/year you started—month/year you left}

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{what you did}                                  {who you did it for}                                  {month/year you started—month/year you left}

## Languages

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{language other than english}                                  {your level of proficiency: native, fluent, conversational, or basic}

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{language other than english}                                  {your level of proficiency: native, fluent, conversational, or basic}

## Special Skills

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{special skill or ability}

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{special skill or ability}

## Awards & Honors

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{Name of Award or Honor}                                  {Who awarded it}                                  {Date received}

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{Name of Award or Honor }                                  {Who awarded it}                                  {Date  
received}

# JESSICA EXAMPLE

nextstepsproject@gmail.com | (503) 555-FAKE | 44 NE Morris St, Portland OR 97212

## EDUCATION & TRAINING

High School Diploma, Roosevelt High School, GPA 2.3. Class of 2014.

Oregon Food Handler Certification, Multnomah County. Received May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Junior Varsity Basketball Player, Roosevelt HS Rough Riders, August 2012—April 2013.

## WORK EXPERIENCE

Barista at Café Friends. {December 2013—April 2014}

Made espresso drinks specialized to each customer's order and delivered throughout office building for their convenience. Met weekly with co-workers to manage café logistics and finances.

Sandwich Artist at Subway. {June 2012—September 2012}

Built customized sandwiches for clientele and provided exceptional customer service. Maintained storefront appearance. Occasionally opened or closed store on manager's behalf.

Babysitter on a freelance basis for family and friends. {January 2009—Present}

Temporarily assumed responsibility for physical, emotional, and developmental needs of children from all age groups (from infancy through pre-adolescence) while parents were occupied. Built positive, caring, and trusting relationships with children. Routinely used conflict management skills.

## SPECIAL SKILLS

Native fluency in English & Spanish. Can drive vehicles with automatic or manual ("stick shift") transmission.

## REFERENCES

Jennifer Friend

*Adolescent Mentor at Friends of the Children*

jfriend@friendsofthechildren.org

Christopher Teacher

*Algebra Teacher at Roosevelt HS*

cteacher@pps.k12.or.us

## Prepare & Apply

*Note: Students who will be working at a part-time or Federal Work-Study job can skip this section.*

Once you have a résumé figured out, you can start finding and applying to jobs that you'd like. The application process is different depending on the type of job: some will ask you to write a "cover letter" (a short essay explaining why the employer should interview you), others will have you fill out an application, and some will do both.

Talk with your coach about what kind of work you're looking for, and research to find out who is hiring in that field. It's a good idea to start applying before you graduate high school, even if you can't take the job yet, because it will give you valuable experience writing applications and doing interviews.

Even if you don't apply to any actual jobs, another way to get experience talking to professionals is by requesting "informational interviews"—where you "interview" the boss or a successful employee in that field! This can help you learn what a particular job is like: what sort of expectations you should have, how the workplace environment feels, pros and cons about that field, and what sort of skills / training you'll need to get hired.

Here are the steps for a successful informational interview:

- 1) Figure out what job or career field you want to learn about.
- 2) Find somebody near you who has that job, either by asking friends/family/school staff, searching on LinkedIn, or simply going to a relevant local business and asking.
- 3) Get in contact with that person, introduce yourself and your goals, and ask if they would be able to meet up with you. Make sure to remember that if they say yes, they are doing *you* a favor—be grateful and try to have a flexible schedule! You will need to meet them at their office or a convenient place; don't expect them to come to you.
- 4) Write questions for that person ahead of time, and bring them alongside materials for taking notes.
- 5) Arrive early at the agreed place and time. Dress as nicely as possible, wearing "business casual." (More info on this at <http://oregonstate.edu/career/business-casual>)
- 6) After asking all the questions you can think of, thank them for their time. Try not to take more than 30minutes total!
- 7) When you get home, write and send them a thank-you note.

You can read some tips on informational interviewing from a professional in this New York Times article: <http://shiftingcareers.blogs.nytimes.com/2007/11/19/my-pet-peeves-about-informational-interviews/>

## Money Management

BUDGET | Fill in how much you think each category will cost you per month. Only include expenses that you pay from your own pocket: for example, enter \$0 in the Housing section if you personally don't pay rent—even if the people you live with do.

Example: Once a year, you pay \$180 for a YMCA membership.  $\$180 \div 12 \text{ months} = \$15$  per month. Enter \$15 under "Any other not yet listed".

Example: Your inhaler prescription costs \$8, and you usually refill it once a week.  $\$8 \times 4 \text{ weeks in a month} = \$32$  monthly. Enter \$32 under Health Care/medical.

Type of Expense	Notes	Cost per month
Housing/Rent	Ideally, this should cost less than half your monthly income.	\$
Water		\$
Electricity		\$
Heat		\$
Internet		\$
Groceries		\$
Transportation	Remember to include occasional expenses like bike repairs!	\$
Health care/medical	Examples: medicine, eyeglasses, doctor/counseling visits.	\$
Personal/hygiene	Examples: toothpaste, shampoo.	\$
Clothing	Remember work clothes (business attire, uniforms, etc.)!	\$
Laundromat/laundry		\$
Phone		\$
Supporting others	Examples: paychecks sent home to family, donations to church.	\$
Entertainment/fun	Examples: Netflix account, eating out, concert tickets.	\$
Savings for emergencies	It's strongly recommended that you try to save \$ every month.	\$
Any other not yet listed		\$
TOTAL MONTHLY EXPENSES	Add all the columns to see how much \$ you'll need each month:	\$

How are you going to afford these expenses — do you have a job, savings account, or other sources of income? Calculate how much money you'll get each month. It should be more than your expenses:

TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

