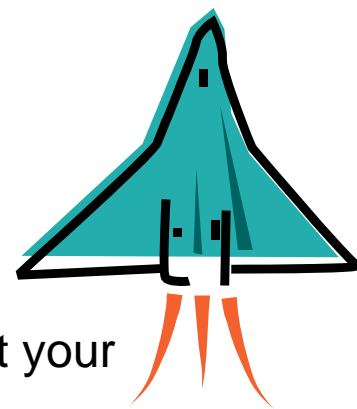


Is my child

Ready to Launch?



Before a rocket leaves the launch pad, a pre-launch check list must be completed --- how about your child's take-off list before they walk out your door after high school???

Can you think of examples where your child has shown you that their check list is complete?

Academic Skills

- ψ Can plan ahead to meet class requirements
- ψ Does homework on time
- ψ Participates in class discussions
- ψ Works cooperatively on class projects
- ψ Works for grades & experiences that fit post high school goals
- ψ Can advocate for him/herself with the teachers/counselors

Decision Making

- ψ Identifies & describes decisions needing to be made
- ψ Can preview outcomes of possible decisions
- ψ Chooses best decision from multiple alternatives
- ψ Can alter decisions after monitoring & evaluation
- ψ Able to delay gratification of wants/desires
- ψ Is aware of obligations, expectations & makes decisions to meet them
- ψ Chooses friends & romantic relationships wisely
- ψ Understands the impact of his/her decisions on others
- ψ Acts on his/her own moral values in making decisions
- ψ Can resist peer pressure when group is doing something against your teen's values
- ψ Can get him/herself out of troubling situations
- ψ Can resist unsafe or unwanted sex

Dependability

- ψ Can be counted on to do what s/he's agreed to do
- ψ Shows up for school, activities, & work on time
- ψ Turns in school work on time
- ψ Holds a part-time job
- ψ Is able to be home alone for 24 hours without breaking rules
- ψ Participates in family's rituals & celebrations

Emotional Skills

- ψ Is able to regulate the emotional intensity of relationships to stay as involved/uninvolved with friends as s/he chooses
- ψ Can regulate emotions to prevent outbursts in a challenging situation
- ψ Can handle romantic relationships respectfully

Financial Skills

- ψ Manages expenses within income
- ψ Keeps credit/debit card expenses within monthly budget
- ψ Reconciles a checking &/or debit account
- ψ Pays bills on time
- ψ Makes own deposits & withdrawal
- ψ Has own social security number memorized

Goal Setting

- ψ Has accurate insight into his/her own strengths & weaknesses
- ψ Plans goals knowing own interests & abilities & capacity for challenge
- ψ Has an idea of what s/he wants to do with his/her life
- ψ Sets goals & works toward accomplishing them
- ψ Evaluates the accomplishment or failure of the goal & determines changes needed

Maintaining a Living Unit' Skills

- ψ Knows how to pick up after him/herself
- ψ Can clean common living spaces
- ψ Can plan, buy for & cook a meal



Motivation

- ψ Is interested in doing well in school
- ψ Picks out own classes
- ψ Chooses & follows own interests/hobbies/activities
- ψ Applies for a part time job
- ψ Fills out own college applications & writes own essays
- ψ Has an optimistic view of the future

Problem Solving

- ψ Uses sound judgment to solve the usual problems of high school life
- ψ Can independently solve challenges that come up with family, school, friends, activities – knows how, when, where to seek help

Respect for Authority

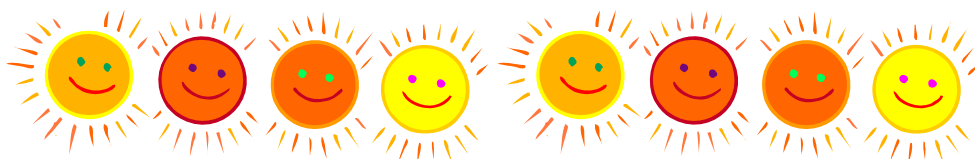
- ψ Obeys legal authority figures
- ψ Acknowledges the authority of school personnel, activity leaders/coaches
- ψ Speaks to family – neighborhood elders with respect
- ψ Negotiates in a respectful tone when disagreeing with authority figures

Respect for Self

- ψ Does not abuse food, drugs, alcohol, tobacco
- ψ Knows body signals for rest, nourishment, stress reduction, exercise
- ψ Can take needed medication independently
- ψ Sets limits on entertainment devices so work can get done
- ψ Can get needs for love & attention met in respectful ways

Resilience

- ψ Is able to bounce back from adversity
- ψ Can see the lesson wrapped in challenges
- ψ Can regroup/recover if a decision proves to be wrong

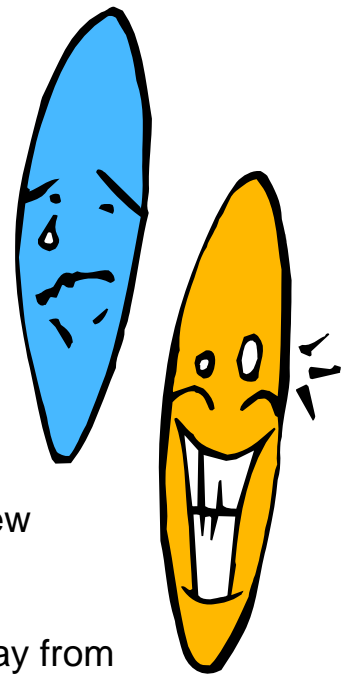


Responsibility

- ψ Takes care of own 'activities of daily living'
- ψ Informs others of his/her whereabouts
- ψ Is where s/he says s/he will be
- ψ Sets own responsible curfew
- ψ Takes care of others as needed (pets, younger sibs, grandparents, neighbors)
- ψ Contributes to the functioning of the family
- ψ Does household chores
- ψ Manages expenses within income
- ψ Accepts responsibility for mistakes & takes steps to make restitution

Self Care Skills

- ψ Buys, wears & cares for clothing appropriate to the season & situation
- ψ Able to get up by own alarm clock
- ψ Uses a calendar & 'to do' list to manage own schedule & obligations
- ψ Can organize, clean & tidy own living space
- ψ Does own laundry
- ψ Makes own appointments
- ψ Can pack a suitcase
- ψ Makes travel & lodging arrangements
- ψ Travels by taxi, bus, train &/or plane independently



Social Skills

- ψ Can meet new people in a new situation
- ψ Can effectively 'market' him/herself
- ψ Attracts, makes & keeps friends
- ψ Listens to others
- ψ Can negotiate relationships & living arrangements in a new setting
- ψ Knows who to trust & who not to trust
- ψ Is not incapacitated by 'home sickness' when staying away from home
- ψ Sets boundaries on personal time & space
- ψ Knows what is normal for others & how own circumstances differ

Use of Resources

- ψ Uses resources available for assistance as needed
- ψ Able to be a helpful resource to friends
- ψ Can entertain him/herself
- ψ Can manage any 'wait time' without disrupting others

Are you ready??

-) I am looking forward to what I can do in my own life once s/he is 'out of the house'
-) Our marriage is strong & can benefit from more time together
-) I like having an independent child
-) I do not expect to feel 'separation anxiety' from my child
-) Facing the challenges of middle age does not overwhelm me
-) My current employment status is satisfactory to me
-) I am happy with the friends in my life
-) My emotional & physical health are fine right now

How to **COACH** your child to independence

- Φ Stay *focused* on a positive outcome
- Φ Be fully *present* with your teaching
- Φ *Listen* before you talk
- Φ *Ask* questions to clarify & to dialogue
- Φ *Validate* & express appreciation
- Φ Focus on your *child's agenda* & respond to it
- Φ *Celebrate* self-responsibility



Other things to read:

Coach Your Teen to Success by Barbara McRae, Achiever's Trade Press, 2004

How Much Is Enough by Clarke, Dawson & Bredehoft, Marlow & Co, 2004

Ready or Not Here Life Comes by Mel Levine, Simon & Schuster, 2005

The Launching Years by Laura Kastner, Three Rivers Press, 2002