

COLLEGE AWARENESS WEEK 2015

As part of College Awareness week -23-27 November, Bush Post Primary school hosted a variety of talks and activities promoting college progression. Teachers were encouraged to spend a few minutes at the start of classes to talk about their own college experience. Events included a visit from DKIT, poster competitions, a talk from a past pupil for first years, a visit to Maynooth College and an evening talk for parents in which our Guidance Counsellor- Ms Sandra Woods explained the CAO and UCAS process to parents.

To reinforce the messages of college awareness week a number of parents were invited to participate in a meeting held in school to come up with some tips for parents sending their son/daughter to college for the first time. Attending were: Fiona McGrath, Liz McConnon, Mary Quinn, Sarah Mallon and Briega Buckley. Their contribution was greatly appreciated. The following is a summary of what came out of that meeting.

One of the parents suggested putting together a calendar of key times in the preparation for going to college. Below is the link to CAO which gives a timetable of key dates.

<https://www.cao.ie/?page=timetableevents&bb=importantdates>

Get Organised:

Encourage your budding college student to:

- Start researching courses and colleges. (ideally start in 5th year)
- Contact students who have completed courses and get their advice
- Make a note of Open Days and put them in your diary.
- Find out what job opportunities result from these courses.
- Try to get work experience in areas of interest.
- Interview someone who works in an area of interest

Check out the following websites:

www.qualifax.ie/

www.susi.ie

www.careersportal.ie/

Results Day

If your son/daughter is unhappy with their result, dealing with their disappointment can be challenging. It may seem the end of the world that they cannot get on the course they want. Adversity can be opportunity knocking. It can build resilience and determination – failure can be the making of a young person. You don't learn from success but from your mistakes.

Starting College

Once they get to college it may seem as though all their troubles are over but the high dropout rate of third level students suggests otherwise. There are a few things you can do to ease their way.

Self-Care

- Teach a few simple recipes
- Get them to shop for and prepare a meal
- Show them how to operate the washing machine
- Make sure they know what supports are available in college – counselling and other help
- Encourage them to join clubs and societies esp. sporting activities – to widen their social outlets and to aid their mental wellbeing.

Be there for them



Just because they have made it to college doesn't make them independent. They still need your support and approval

- Ask them about their course
- Listen actively-read between the lines are they getting a bit lost or disillusioned
- Be prepared for homesickness although **they** won't call it that.
- Trust your instincts – you know your child
- Be prepared for the impact of your child leaving home on yourself and the rest of the family
- Encourage them to think about what they would like to do at the end of their course. (Many students experience a post degree slump where they feel uncertain about where to go next.
- Stack up the CV – encourage them to learn a new skill, take a part time job or volunteer.

A Word from our Career Guidance Counsellor

Make sure they take care of their mental health. This can be done in a variety of ways, the following are suggestions

- Physical Activity/sport
- Yoga/meditation/mindfulness
- Keeping in touch with friends
- Socialising

Work and the Leaving Cert

Students who work part time need to balance the work/study element of the Leaving Cert. It is a very challenging year and work may get in the way of achieving goals. Make sure your teenager has the balance right.

It's never too late

Remember learning is a lifelong process and some young people take a little longer to find their way but with love, encouragement and support they will reach their potential.

