Greetings! As the Christmas season approaches, I want to wish each and every student a very Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year. It has been my privilege to, once again, work with you. I wish you and your family all the best this season. Barb

Greetings! Wishing you all the joys and happiness of the holiday season. One of the greatest joys of the holiday season is giving thanks and for wishing the very best to happen for the New Year. With that being said, don’t wait for opportunity. Create it. For the juniors and seniors please remember to take the time to apply for scholarships over your holiday break. Reminder: Upward Bound will be having an ACT/SAT test workshop for our next Saturday session to be held on January 25, 2020. I strongly encourage the students to plan to be there and receive the full benefits of this opportunity, especially for the sophomore, junior, and senior level students. I also want to say thank you to the students for being the reason I love working with the Upward Bound Program as your Educational Outreach Counselor. From personal experience, I can relate to the trail and tribulations that come with being a first-generation college student. You are not alone. Remember you only fail when you stop trying. Let’s continue to defy the odds and create more success stories around Southern West Virginia.

- Jasmine N. Hall, Educational Outreach Counselor

Wow! What a year!!!! I hope that you all are in a winners/ winning state of mind. This year (2019) has been a challenge in many ways but looking back I see that those challenges were necessary for change. As you will all find out as you progress through life that challenges, obstacles, successes, etc. are the catalysts that inspire true growth and development.

I pray that you all enjoy your time off. I also hope that you use a portion of this “off time” to consider the things that you need to do in the coming year…. (2020) as in 20/20 vision- see the things ahead of you clearly. If you can’t quite envision what you need to do then visit an office that can help you adjust your academic and life sights such as your counselor, an advisor, your Upward Bound counselor, or any responsible adult. Focus clearly and intently on being productive as well as successful. The result will undoubtedly be positive!. Happy Holidays and best wishes in the coming year!

Michael Craighead
Things to think about before taking the SAT or ACT

**BEFORE THE SAT**

1. Diagnose your skills early on
2. Take at least two full practice tests.
3. Familiarize yourself with the instructions for each test section.
4. Study outside the box.
5. Take a break the night before the test.
6. Set yourself up for success on Test Day

**BEFORE THE ACT.**

1. Register for the ACT, if you haven't yet.
2. Become familiar with ACT structure and format.
3. Get Oriented ACT content and question styles.
4. Identify your weaknesses.
5. Set a target score.
6. Create a study plan.
7. Learn essential test content.
8. Practice test strategies.
December Birthdays
We want to wish all our students with Birthdays in December a very Happy Birthday!

Levonne Stephens
Damien Ward
Ellissa Brown
Destiny Padgett
Kaylee Brady
Ja’nazjah Ivy
Darion Easley
Ethan Whisman
Jaycalin Hedrick

December Saturday session
Helpful Transition Insights to Share, From High School to College ~

Here are 10 concepts and pointers you will want to share and talk about with your child to help prepare him or her for the transition from being a big fish in a small pond to being a little fish in a big ocean.

1. Make sure that their expectations are realistic so the challenges and associated feelings of self-doubt they will certainly experience during this new stage are understood as being normal and expected. If your child didn’t need to apply much effort in high school to succeed, alert him to what’s coming: new and more difficult academic demands that can leave a Freshman feeling discouraged and defeated. Your son or daughter may falsely conclude that she is not smart enough, and effort would be futile.

2. Since its normal for fleeting feelings of self-doubt to occur, explain that a feeling is not evidence or an indication of reality. Also, caution your child against the tendency to make comparisons as a way to try to feel more secure. People aren’t created equally, and we can all find ourselves deficient in some way.

3. College stress is a given and can be managed by exercising self-care, eating healthy, getting enough sleep, and engaging in some form of exercise or other stress-relieving activity.

4. Stress magnifies negative thinking and a common pattern for students to be aware of is black-and-white or all-or-nothing thinking. In the college setting, this might mean that when a grade or one’s performance is disappointing or falls short of a hoped-for expectation, it is seen as a complete failure. Remind your child that when they were little they weren’t able to use a fork or tie their shoes after their first attempt; rather, it took time to master those skills. Help your child recognize that there are degrees of success, and perseverance will almost always result in improvement.

5. You might want to explain that grades are not a measure of self-worth or potential, or an accurate gauge of future success. Some people are better test takers than others. Most important are work ethic, integrity, and a can-do attitude—these are the traits that are more predictive of success.

6. Disappointments are inevitable and should not be viewed as an indication of a never-ending cycle of defeat. Encourage your child to pay attention to self-talk or chatter, and to recognize that words like “never” and “always” are not helpful; such words will cause anxiety and a sense of hopelessness. Thoughts influence feelings, so changing your thoughts can change your feelings.

7. Limitations and disappointments are not the same as failures and flaws. Even the most accomplished person is not equally strong in all areas. Encourage your child to use him or herself as a yardstick in order to gauge improvement, instead of comparing performances with others.

8. Educate your child that avoidance as a strategy, when feeling stressed and uncomfortable, is not helpful; it may bring temporary relief, but in the long run will magnify the threat of whatever is being avoided. When you choose to avoid a situation, you silently convince yourself there is danger associated with that situation, and you will not be able to cope. It’s important for your child to understand that the anxiety experienced is not from a real threat—like being held up at gunpoint—but rather a feeling. Feelings are transitory and not dangerous, and will subside. Urge your child to push through.

9. Discuss that doing something new is scary for everyone and even though others may look unaffected on the outside, they are likely feeling what your child is feeling on the inside. Caution her not to jump to the conclusion that there is something wrong because other people appear happy, confident, and adjusting easily when they are not.

10. If you have been your child’s advocate for many of his growing up years, assertiveness lessons will be helpful. Take living with roommates as one example. Your child must learn the skill of expressing her feelings in a direct and respectful way. When a roommate oversteps a boundary or disregards her feelings, by inviting a third person into the room to spend the night, or being excessively messy, for instance, teach your child that it is best to address the issue sooner rather than later...before resentment sets in.

(Psychology Today)