



KEY TO COLLEGE PROGRAM INFORMATION

Purpose

The Key to College is a Circle K International (CKI) program developed especially for high school students who are interested in pursuing higher education and gaining insight about college and university life, service, and leadership.

Benefits of the Program

Sponsoring a Key to College Program benefits both the high school audience and the CKI club in several ways:

1. High school students have the opportunity to learn about college life first-hand from college students. In addition to learning how to select and apply for their ideal colleges, high school students will learn all about living on campus, selecting courses, applying for financial aid, joining student organizations, choosing a major, and adapting to campus social life and schoolwork.
2. The Key to College Program gives members of CKI the opportunity to interact with high school students, often members of Key Club International. While the Program is not limited to Key Club audiences by any means, CKI groups may wish to target Key Club members so that they may begin to develop a relationship that will enhance both organizations' service potentials in the future.
3. CKI members may further develop their leadership and presentation skills by providing this needed community service.

October is Key to College Month

The month of October is Key to College month. Consequently, Circle K International strongly encourages each CKI club to consider sponsoring a Key to College Program at a local high school or perhaps Key Club

regional training conference or fall rally during this month. CKI groups should begin preparing in August or early September so that they may be ready to present before high school seniors begin the application process. Clubs are not restricted to presenting a Key to College Program only in October or only to high school seniors, however; a club may sponsor the Program during any month it deems appropriate.

Outline

The following outline can be a successful tool when planning and presenting a Key to College Program. Please note, however, that it can be altered at the presenters' discretion. Allow the outline to reflect diversity within your district or division to best suit your future audiences.

If you have questions about presenting this program, contact the Circle K International office at 800/KIWANIS or 317/875-8755.

Consider the following tips when developing your Key to College presentation:

1. **Be yourself and have fun with it.** Talk to the high school students on their level; they didn't come to hear a teacher give them a lecture. Give honest but tactful answers. Students want to hear the real story.
2. **Have handouts.** This way, your audience can follow with you, take notes, and reference your literature later.
3. **Be interactive.** Ask and answer questions, encourage your audience to actively participate, and consider performing role-playing skits to keep students actively engaged.
4. **Do not push CKI.** Your audience has come to learn how to select, apply for, and survive in college—not CKI. While presenters should feel free to introduce themselves and communicate CKI's purpose in developing a Key to College Program, they should be very conscious of their focus—again, college, not CKI.
5. **Bring applications.** Presenters should also consider supplying audience members with applications to different schools in the area (district). As a result, students may begin to familiarize themselves with the

applications early and already be prepared if they

wish to apply to those schools.

KEY TO COLLEGE PROGRAM OUTLINE

Choosing and Getting into College

Introduction (*Any handouts should be distributed now.*)

- What are the main areas you will talk about today?
- What is CKI?
- Find out how many seniors there are
 - o What are schools and majors, if known

Choosing the Right College

- Ask students “Why go to college?” (*If blackboard or poster board is available, chart down what they say.*)
- Explain any reasons they may not come up with
 - o Get a better or higher-paying job
 - o Meet friends
 - o Learn a skill or trade
- Explain what types of schools there are:
 - o Small vs. big
 - Class size
 - Choice in majors
 - Sports
 - o Private vs. public
 - Cost
 - Class Size
 - Programs on campus
- Commuting vs. living on campus

Application Process

- Filling out applications
 - o Ask how many students have filled out applications
 - o Ask what their feelings were on them
 - o Discuss how to choose/write essay topics
 - o Explain differences between early decision, early action, and regular decision
- Submitting applications
 - o Advise students to submit applications three weeks before due date
 - o Advise students to make copies of all information going out

- o Advise students to ask guidance counselors for transcripts and recommendations ahead of time
- o Advise students not to stress if they do not hear back promptly from schools but rather to ask their counselors to call the schools and find out if there is a backlog.

Getting More Money for College

- ***Most high schools have grants and scholarships from local contributors***
 - o Advise students to apply for as many as possible
 - o Advise applicants to use one essay for as many applications as possible/appropriate to save time
- ***Other grants and scholarships may be found online***
 - o There are a lot of online sites that give info on where you can apply for national or local grants/scholarships. (*Handouts on sites are usually great for this.*)
- Financial aid
 - o Remind students that some schools will give them aid even if they do not think they are qualified
 - o Advise students to complete and submit FASFA forms (now online)

(*Take a break for questions and stretching.*)

College Life

Freshman Year: What to Expect

- ***Choosing the right classes:*** Find out if anyone has been accepted to and/or decided on a school. Ask for their intended majors.
 - o Advise students to work on their four-year plans early:
 - To take at least 15 credits every semester
 - To take classes which give them some “breaks”

- To get a head start on their major classes as soon as possible; this ensures on-time graduation
 - Give general tips on how to survive the classes themselves:
 - Warn them that freshman attendance is often mandatory
 - Explain the importance of syllabi
 - Advise the students to get their professors' e-mail addresses and phone numbers so that they can be in touch in case they miss a class
- **Freshman orientation:** Many schools offer freshman orientations so those freshmen feel more comfortable with the school. Advise students to:
 - Get to know people in their orientation groups.
 - Learn the geography of the campus/buildings
 - Ask for help on campus if they need it; upper-classmen have all been there before
- **Dorm life:** See who intends to live on campus, and advise them to:
 - Attempt to get along with their roommates as often as possible
 - Try to meet new roommates before the school year begins
 - Consider making a contract with new roommates in order to discuss likes, dislikes, and expectations
 - Inquire about campus dining/meal card options
- **Extra Curricular Activities: Ask who intends to participate in sports, clubs, Greek life, community service groups, etc.**
 - Talk about transcripts and how being involved is great
 - Teach time management
 - Describe differences between clubs and Greek life
 - Give brief explanation of CKI and of the clubs in your district
- Ask for questions and answer all to best of your ability. (This is usually a very hot topic, and students frequently ask about parties and who can attend a Greek life party. They often believe everything they see on TV, and you should explain life in college is nothing like that on television.)

Open Forum

Not all areas are on this script, as it is designed for presenters to be able to drop and add items according to the students' interests. After the presenters have completed most of their planned presentation, they should open the forum up for more questions and answers to make this Program most effective.

If you have questions about presenting this program, contact the Circle K International office at 800/KIWANIS or 317/875-8755.

Circle K International
3636 Woodview Trace
Indianapolis, IN 46268-3196
www.circlek.org
cki@kiwanis.org