Talking about money is hard! Having a good understanding and relationship with money is important, not only in everyday life, but in conversations about college.

Encourage students to have conversations with their parents about their personal money habits. Spend 5-10 minutes, in Advisory or in a class, once a week, to have students reflect on these financial topics. One option is to ask students to ask their parents one of the questions, make notes about their discussion, then reflect on the information, or discuss as a group. You can also pick one or 2 questions to discuss during a financial aid night, or even include them in school or classroom newsletters.

# Conversation & writing prompts

1. What does our family save money for?
2. What is a college savings plan?
3. What do you want to save money for?
4. How challenging is it to save money? What thoughts do you have about saving money?
5. How much money does our family spend on housing, transportation, and food each month?
6. How does our family prioritize spending? Why?
7. Does our family have a household budget? Discuss.
8. Why is saving money important?
9. What is the best piece of financial advice you have received? Who gave you this advice?
10. How much money are we willing/able to invest in training or education after high school?
11. What do you think about borrowing money from family/friends? What about lending money to family/friends?
12. What are our monthly expenses? How much does this work out to per day?
13. How did you learn to manage, save, or spend money?
14. Is there anything that you have purchased that you regret? Talk about that.
15. Some families charge their young adult children rent. How does our family feel about that?
16. What are our family’s top 10 financial priorities?
17. How does our family use credit? Do you have any rules for using a credit card?
18. Can you share some money mistakes you made when you were younger and what you learned from them?
19. How do you handle unexpected expenses, and do you have a strategy for dealing with financial emergencies?
20. How do you plan for long term expenses like college or retirement?

Questions adapted from GEAR UP Vermont’s Financial Literacy Yack Stacks