



SENIOR YEAR
Bucket List
(Family Style)
EXAMPLES



FIRST SEMESTER



BACK TO SCHOOL BBQ (SENIOR KICK-OFF)

Host a party for your senior and their friends. The purpose of this party is to encourage the students to finish their last year well.



CLEAN UP NIGHT

Help them prepare by reviewing their social media accounts. Bring in their favorite takeout, play some music, and be gracious.



PANCAKES FOR DINNER

Host a pancake breakfast for your senior and their friends after a Friday night football game/band performance/ robotics competition. Take lots of pictures to use at the graduation party.



STRESS-FREE SENIOR

Questions start the beginning of the year like, “Where are you going next year?” or “What do you plan to do?” The pressure mounts as they think about paying bills and becoming adults.

Find a time to talk with your senior about how they can relax over the coming year. Is there a playlist? Can they take an exercise class? Schedule time for hiking? Give them a “phrase” they can use to answer the hard questions like “Where are you going next year?” “I am still deciding between schools. Thank you for asking.”



FRIENDS & THE FUTURE

Invest in the possibilities of the future by working with your senior to think of a few friends to invite and then find a college activity they can do together, i.e., football game, band performance, on-campus concert, theater play. Look up the university’s website or social media accounts for events. Help pay or drive to the event.



PARENT PROJECT: EMPTY NEST

The senior year is settling in. The thoughts and emotions of what is happening start to sink in. Your senior is busy and out and about. As you spend this year helping them with projects, don’t forget about yourself. Find time and space to deal, grieve, and accept the season of life. Set aside some time and, in your way, find healthy ways to cope, heal, and grieve so you can accept and enjoy the season of life. For example:

- ◆ Set aside a Sunday afternoon, and allow yourself time to reflect on the last 18 years using photos from your phone.
- ◆ Write out expressions of thanks.
- ◆ Take an afternoon on the golf course by yourself to process your thoughts.
- ◆ After a long, hard’s day work, grab a dinner-to-go, find a park bench, and ask yourself how you are doing with the transition.

As one season of life ends, another season of life begins. When you honor well “What Was,” you grant yourself the opportunity to honor “What Is” to come.



FALL, FASHION, & FAILINGS (GIRLS) OR FALL, FOOTBALL, AND FAILINGS (BOYS)

Now more than ever, your kids need to know the places you made mistakes and how you learned from them. Find a mutual interest plus a suitable locale for conversation and share with them ways you failed and how you learned from it.



Communicate the goal ahead of time, so they understand the purpose. For example:

- ◆ Take them on a weekend road trip to your hometown. Share the history of what you learned.
- ◆ Go to a nearby university’s football game, and share stories while you drive.
- ◆ If they have a favorite store, drive to one across town to have more time to talk.

Sharing parts of our past are quite tricky sometimes, so talking during a shoulder-to-shoulder activity helps (such as driving). Tell them what you learned, and, if, or how, you would do it differently. What did you do that you would repeat?



WORK HARD. PLAY HARD.

Within less than a year, your senior will, most likely, be pulling themselves out of bed for class, managing money, cooking, and doing laundry. They will take on more responsibilities than ever before.

Communicate to them the purpose of the evening: Work Hard. Play Hard. Take them to a restaurant with video games or an arcade.

Work Hard. Take a notepad and ask your senior to list responsibilities they know how to do. Then ask them to list the ones they don't. Next, you list the items you want them to learn. Discuss when and how they can learn.

Play Hard. Now is the time to play. When your senior and you share a recreation activity, the stress fades away for a few hours.



VOLUNTEER

Seniors can fall into the trap where life feels like it centers around them. This month, find an activity or two where your family can volunteer around the holidays without it counting towards their resume or college admission process.



BAKE-OFF

Have each parent prepare a dish or dessert for the judges, who are the kids. Have the kids establish the parameters ahead of time, i.e., two-hour limit, five ingredients, etc. They also assign a prize to the one who loses the contest (The one who loses must eat the kids' chosen flavor of ice cream, a raw vegetable from the grocery store, receive the honorary "spray-painted golden spoon," etc.).

SECOND SEMESTER



“SENIOR-ITIS”

Senior-itis is a real thing because the last semester of high school is a struggle. Many of them have finished the college application process, and they are ready to be done!

Find time during the week before school starts back to celebrate the “last lap” of the race. Discuss what it means to finish strong- grades, physical health, spiritually, etc. Theme it out with Race Car Checkered Flag Decor (Black and white).

Cook a black and white meal (Use food to dye pasta noodles black and then pair it with Alfredo sauce.). Have black-and-white desserts like cookies and creme ice cream, moon pies, brownies and ice cream, etc.



NEW ACTIVITY. NEW YEAR.

Find an activity that neither the parent nor the senior has ever done. Painting class? Dance class? Horseback riding lessons? Skating lessons? Guitar lesson?

Together, pick an activity, and step into vulnerability. Inspiration comes when your senior sees you choose courage. And, sometimes, it is the other way around!



CANVAS COLLAGE

Collect the pictures from the activities over the years. Many 1-hour print locations or online websites have pre-made templates. Design the collage, print it on canvas, and hang it around the house. Use it again at the graduation party.



SENIOR SPREE: WALKABOUT

Whether we want to admit it or not, seniors will be driving any and everywhere within the next 12 months. Set aside a weekend (or a day) with your senior.

Let them know a budget amount and the distance of miles, then ask them to plan the day how they want- and you are the ride-a-long. They are in charge. If you live near a big city, encourage them to learn how to navigate the transit system, drive during rush hour, or take city transportation.



JENGA FAMILY NIGHT

Write a few words that represent family memories on individual Jenga pieces. If possible, use technology to put photos from your phone on the television and watch old videos as reminders.

When the night is over, save the item as a parents’ keepsake. Take a closeup picture and send it with your senior to college.



SKIP-A-DAY

If you have a student, who is experiencing severe “senior-itis” and has the grades and attendance to miss, clear your day and work schedule to take your student somewhere one-on-one. Communicate ahead of time and plan together. They will not ever forget this day.



GRATITUDE BEFORE YOU GO

Many seniors start to recognize that time is almost up. They can become reflective and reminiscent. Discuss with your senior to find a space for your family to write gratitudes as they come to mind, i.e., a journal for the book lover, dry erase markers on the bathroom mirror for the artist, chalk for the driveway.

Ask the senior to write all the memories and moments that come to mind over the next two months. Use what they write at their graduation party (with permission, of course!).



SIBLING SATURDAY

Senior year is hard on seniors and parents, but also the younger siblings. They see a change, but can't fully understand it. Because seniors can sometimes feel nostalgic closer to graduation, ask your senior to take out their younger siblings on a date, such as an experiential restaurant in the big city or a professional sports game. Encourage empathy in the senior for their sister or brother.



THE COUNTDOWN-IS-ON CALENDAR

Find a wall space in your house and hang a countdown calendar to graduation. Leave encouraging notes such as “You’ve got this!” or “Almost!”



GRADUATION! GRADUATION! GRADUATION!

Your senior has worked 12 years for this one! Enjoy the moment with them.



GRADUATION PARTY!

Have fun and celebrate their hard work.

My
SENIOR YEAR
Bucket List
(Family Style)



FIRST SEMESTER

ACTIVITY: _____
DATE: _____

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DATE: _____

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DATE: _____

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ACTIVITY: _____
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My
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SECOND SEMESTER

ACTIVITY: _____
DATE: _____

ACTIVITY: _____
DATE: _____

ACTIVITY: _____
DATE: _____

ACTIVITY: _____
DATE: _____

ACTIVITY: _____
DATE: _____

ACTIVITY: *Graduation!*
DATE: _____

ACTIVITY: *Graduation Party!*
DATE: _____