
**About the author:** Pasick is a family therapist and clinical psychologist in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and teaches at the Fielding Institute. She is married and has two adult sons.

**Summary:** Pasick presents parents’ preparation for sending their child off to college in manageable chunks of activities. An underlying theme of the book is that planning and preparation make for a smooth transition for both the students and for the student’s family. From both psychological and practical perspectives, Pasick’s guide is designed to help any family that has a child preparing for college. Laying the groundwork now for this transition will minimize future difficulties and increase the likelihood that the teen will have a successful college experience. For example, Pasick suggest that, in order to help develop the teen’s facility for independent thinking, parents should take advantage of opportunities for arguments. Ask the teen to make an argument for and against the position that he or she is taking.

Chapters are organized according to a chronology of likely events in the college preparation stage. The first chapter addresses identity and personal responsibility, two issues that need to be addressed early in the teen years as necessary building blocks to individual maturity. The next chapter addresses the college search, and Pasick offers practical advice, such as determining early on how much money the family can pay for college. This will, of course, determine if the student will need to apply for student loans and other forms of aid, and may determine the kinds of schools to which the student will apply for admission.

Subsequent chapters describe how to research colleges, and offer suggestions for what parents and their students can do each year of high school towards preparing for college. Parents are encouraged to prepare for the teen’s final year of living at home and Pasick offers keen advice, such as practice in letting go of your child. Going off to college is the entryway into a new life for both the teen and their family. Despite whatever physical distance may separate them, parents must stay connected with the teenager. This can be accomplished by simply keeping the teenager informed about what is going on at home.

**Reviewer** Barbara Dargis is a writer, journalist, former graduate student, and mother of four boys ranging in age from their late-teens to late-20s.