



## Seven Simple Steps To Save For College

(NAPSA)—According to college planning experts, getting started with a savings plan has never been more important. With student loans drying up, parents have been dealt a huge wake-up call. But the good news is that the grim headlines are helping young families learn that saving for college right from the very beginning is the best option.

Rebecca Matthias, president and founder of etrust, a MasterCard-linked college savings program, has made educating young families about the importance of saving early her priority. The good news is that saving does not have to be difficult and every little bit does add up, says Matthias. “I have a few simple tips that fit into parents’ already tight budgets and make saving a part of daily life.”

**1. Start thinking about college when your child is born or even before.** Time is the biggest financial resource most families have when it comes to college savings. Unlike some catastrophic expenses, college tuition comes with a pretty generous built-in warning period.

**2. Open a tax-free 529 college savings account...yesterday!** There is no better way to watch your college savings grow.

**3. Turn your everyday spending into everyday saving.** Sign up for a credit card that deposits rewards where you really need them—into your 529. Unlike other programs, the Futuretrust MasterCard can be linked to any 529 without a cap on rewards that can be earned. Members earn a minimum of 1 percent every time they use the card, and more with many of the partners in the Futuretrust Preferred Merchant Network.



**The sooner you start saving for college, the more time your money will have to appreciate.**

**4. Educate yourself about the performance of the different 529s out there, as well as the tax benefits your state offers.** Depending on those factors, your state’s 529 may or may not be the best choice for you.

**5. Set up your 529 so that money is directly deposited from your checking or savings account each month.** Nothing is easier than automatic savings. And saving just \$25 a month starting when your child is born will yield \$11,716 for college, with 8 percent compounded interest.

**6. Allocate windfalls to college savings.** Putting away money that is not accounted for in your monthly budget is the most painless way to save. Tax rebates, bonuses, gifts—to the 529.

**7. Increase your monthly savings every time you get a raise at work.** You’ll save more without noticing or feeling it.

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