



Finding the Right Fit

VISIT COLLEGE CAMPUSES

Visiting a college campus is one of the most exciting steps in choosing a college. If possible, it's best if your teen can visit multiple campuses before senior year. Visiting colleges is a great way to get a feel for what college is like. It can help your family and child decide if a specific college is a right fit.

Exploring campuses is well worth your while. You don't have to travel far —visiting local two- and four-year colleges is just as valuable. It's best to go when the college is in session. That way, you'll get to see it when classes are meeting and day-to-day activities are taking place.

Campus visits can range from a quick hour to an overnight stay, from a casual guided tour to a formal presentation. Most campus visits will include the following:

- An information session. An admissions representative talks to you or your group about the college before the campus tour.
- A campus tour. These are usually led by current students. You'll see the main parts of the campus and have a chance to ask questions.

To arrange a visit, contact that school's admissions office or check with your child's high school guidance counselor to see if they are planning any group tours of nearby colleges that you and your child could attend.

GEAR UP stands for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs and is a federally-funded program that helps rural, low-income middle and high schools prepare students for education after high school.

Extra-Curricular Activities Matter

Getting involved in clubs, sports, work, or other pursuits outside the classroom can give your teen new skills, help build self-confidence and self-esteem, and be fun! In addition, extracurricular activities can play a role in college admission and scholarship applications. Extracurricular activities also play a role when your child applies to colleges. Most college applications ask about activities. That is because the things that a student does outside the classroom show what he or she is passionate about. Colleges want to know more about students than what their grades and test scores can tell them. What a child does in his or her free time can showcase important personal qualities.

Did you know?

There is no way to predict what activities will impress college admissions folks. What counts is how you are able express what your chosen activities mean to you.



Apply it

Student Checklist

- Explore interests. It doesn't have to be sports or an academically-related club. Consider potential careers and try to find activities related to fields that interest you. Activities can be outside of school as well, like in the community. Remember! It's quality over quantity.
- Remember that school still comes first. Extracurricular activities are important - but doing well in classes trumps sports or clubs.

Family Checklist

- Explore interests with your child and encourage involvement. Talk to your student about the kinds of activities he or she is interested in. Help your child get involved in school or in the community.
- Remind your teen that school still comes first. Make sure your child understands your expectations for good grades.

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GEAR UP Right Choices for Youth