

Higher Education Planning for Teenagers

This playbook describes the process for preparing teenagers and their families for the college application process. It includes steps for financial planning, selecting an appropriate institution, and understanding the application steps.

Step 1: **Begin Early**

Initiate conversations about higher education with your teenager early in their high school career to gauge their interests and goals. Encourage research into potential career paths to inform their educational decisions.

Step 2: **Research Options**

Investigate different higher education institutions and programs. Consider factors like location, size, available majors, campus culture, and cost. Utilize college fairs, informational websites, and campus visits to gather information.

Step 3: **Set Goals**

Work with your teenager to establish academic and extracurricular goals, ensuring that they align with the requirements and expectations of their targeted institutions.

Step 4: **Financial Planning**

Create a financial plan to cover college expenses. Explore different funding sources such as savings, scholarships, grants, student loans, and work-study programs. Speak with a financial advisor if necessary.

Step 5: **Scholarship Search**

Search for scholarships early. Utilize databases, school counselors, and community organizations to find scholarships for which your teenager is eligible.

Step 6: **Standardized Tests**

Prepare for standardized tests like the SAT or ACT well in advance. Consider enrolling in test preparation courses or using practice materials.

Step 7: **Application Preparation**

Assist your teenager in preparing their college applications. This includes writing essays, obtaining letters of recommendation, and ensuring that all components meet the requirements and deadlines.

Step 8: **Final Decision**

Evaluate offers of admission and financial aid packages. Discuss the pros and cons of each choice with your teenager and make a well-informed final decision together.

General Notes

Continuous Support

Provide emotional support and encourage a balanced approach to avoid undue stress during the college application process. Keep the lines of communication open with your teenager.

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