

Suggested College Trip Itineraries

For families that are interested in planning a trip to visit colleges, the College Counseling Office has compiled a list of commonly suggested itineraries. While this list is by no means exhaustive, our hope is that it will serve as a starting point and a helpful resource as you begin your college search. Once you have identified the itinerary that appeals most to you, visit each college's admissions website to view their schedule of visiting opportunities (typically a campus tour given by a student tour guide and an information session given by an admissions officer). Bear in mind, as a general guideline, it is difficult to visit more than two colleges or universities in one day. At the bottom of some itineraries, you will find alternate college suggestions that you may wish to visit.

Boston Trip

Day 1: Boston University & Boston College

Day 2: Northeastern University & Tufts University

Day 3: Harvard University & Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Alternate College Suggestions: Emerson College, Brown University (Rhode Island), Bentley University, Brandeis University, Babson College, Wellesley College, College of the Holy Cross (Worcester)

Western Mass Trip

Day 1: Amherst College & Williams College

Day 2: Smith College & Mount Holyoke College

Day 3: University of Massachusetts Amherst & Hampshire College

Alternate College Suggestions: Springfield College

Upstate New York Trip

Day 1: Marist College & Vassar College

Day 2: Union College & Skidmore College

Day 3: Colgate University & Hamilton College

Day 4: Cornell University & Ithaca College

Alternate College Suggestions: Hobart & William Smith Colleges, St. Lawrence University, Syracuse University, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, University of Rochester, Wells College, Rochester Institute of Technology

Maine Trip

Day 1: University of New Hampshire & Bowdoin College

Day 2: Bates College & Colby College

Day 3: University of Maine-Orono & College of the Atlantic

Alternate College Suggestions: University of New England, Dartmouth College (NH)

Pennsylvania Trip

Day 1: Lafayette College & Lehigh University

Day 2: Gettysburg College & Dickinson College
Day 3: Bucknell University & Pennsylvania State University
Day 4: University of Pittsburgh & Carnegie Mellon University

Alternate College Suggestions: Muhlenberg College, Franklin & Marshall College, Allegheny College, Moravian College

Virginia/North Carolina Trip

Day 1: University of Virginia & University of Richmond,
Day 2: Washington and Lee University & Virginia Tech
Day 3: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Duke University

Alternate College Suggestions: College of William and Mary, University of Mary Washington, Randolph-Macon Women's College, James Madison University

Chicago Trip

Day 1: University of Chicago & DePaul University
Day 2: Northwestern University & Lake Forest College
Day 3: Loyola University (Chicago)

Alternate College Suggestions: University of Notre Dame (Indiana), University of Wisconsin (Wisconsin)

Connecticut Trip

Day 1: Wesleyan University & Trinity College
Day 2: Yale University & Connecticut College
Day 3: University of Connecticut

Alternate College Suggestions: Quinnipiac University, Fairfield University, Sacred Heart University

Southern California Trip

Day 1: Occidental College & UCLA
Day 2: University of Southern California & Loyola Marymount
Day 3: Claremont Colleges (Pomona, Claremont McKenna, Pitzer, Harvey Mudd, and Scripps)

Alternate College Suggestions: University of Redlands, Pepperdine College, Whittier College, UC Santa Barbara, UC San Diego

Northern California Trip

Day 1: UC Davis & UC Berkeley
Day 2: Stanford University & Santa Clara College

Philadelphia Trip

Day 1: University of Pennsylvania and Drexel University
Day 2: Villanova University & Bryn Mawr College (all-female)
Day 3: Swarthmore College & Haverford College

Washington D.C./Baltimore Trip

Day 1: University of Maryland & George Mason University

Day 2: George Washington University & Georgetown University

Day 3: American University & Catholic University of America

Day 4: Johns Hopkins University & Goucher College

Alternate College Suggestions: Loyola College in Maryland, Towson University



College admissions scandal: Even if you could give your kid everything, should you?

Actress Felicity Huffman gets 14 days jail in US college admissions scandal. (Joseph Prezioso/AFP)

By **Ned Johnson**

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“Yale or jail. That’s what the kids here think,” a schools superintendent told me last spring. How times have changed. On Friday, Felicity Huffman was sentenced to 14 days in prison and 250 hours of community service for her involvement in paying to get her child higher SAT scores for college admission.

The new saying is more like, “You go to Yale, I’ll go to jail.”

Is your kid’s college acceptance so important that you would commit a felony to get them in? For some, the answer appears to be yes. Apart from the sad saga of the Rick Singer conflagration, I worry enormously about the secondhand smoke of a dumpster fire that is wafting across the landscape of American schools and families, as we as parents try to help our kids not only succeed as learners but also develop as people, citizens and workers.

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Something has clearly gone wrong when parents are prepared to risk not just their own integrity but also their kids’, as well as their freedom. And while the message that these guilty parents held in mind may have been *I would do ANYTHING for you to have opportunity and success*, here are the actual messages these young people received, all of which undermine their autonomy:

- If you do not go to an elite enough college, you will not be successful in life.
- You really cannot do this without me.
- Where you go to college matters more than your (or my) integrity.
- If you work hard and fall short of your goal, you cannot handle the rejection or adversity.

These falsehoods infect not just the guilty’s kids, but also parents and students across the country who are transfixed by the whole sordid affair. Beyond the utter lunacy of the current college admission scandal is a much more widespread angst among parents and, increasingly, struggles among their kids. It is the compulsion that parents feel to control, manage or orchestrate outcomes for their kids that is at the heart of the matter.

For 25 years, I have helped students prepare for admissions tests. I've worked with the children of some of the most wealthy, powerful and influential parents in the D.C. area. The kids of billionaires, senators, titans of industry — you get the idea. I've also seen the kids of "ordinary" parents, who, like I was, would be candidates for Pell Grants or at least some financial aid when they attended college.

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Some of the behavior I've witnessed would make your hair stand on end. I've had parents tell me, in the presence of their kids, that they would only pay for their child's education if it were at Harvard, Yale or Princeton, and not if they attended "those lesser Ivies." I've had parents inquire about how much I would charge to work with their child and not anyone else within their child's school during that year, hoping to cut down on the competition. I've had them let me know of the million-dollar pledge they've made to an elite university, while acknowledging that it was the one school their child said they did not want to attend.

I've also witnessed some beautiful moments and heartfelt parenting. From my earliest clients in 1993, I took note of parents who had the kind of kids anyone would be proud to call their own. Their curious, kind, polite, hard-working and modest attributes were clear. What did these kids all have in common? Parents who seemed to support and encourage the higher education process without coddling or pushing.

Parents have always wanted to help their kids succeed. Those with more (more wealth, more education, more time) have the opportunity, and option, to do more. But even if you could give your kid everything, should you? What to give and what to withhold? And what outcomes deserve time, attention and support?

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Those questions sound as if they'd have obvious answers: Education! Success! Opportunities!

I propose another: fostering in kids the sense that *this is their life*. If it seems obvious, it's not; I see far too many parents who, perhaps out of ego but more likely out of fear, feel the compulsion to manage their children's lives as though their kids were their avatars.

During my time in education, and increasingly in the past decade, psychologists have noted ever-increasing rates of anxiety and depression in young people. "Snowflakes!" some exclaim. Others deride the "failure to launch" generation, seemingly devoid of grit, drive or work ethic, raised with trophies for participation. Why don't kids today have any motivation not tied to a grade, praise or reward? I have a client who angsts about her son, "He's SO entitled!" as though he raised himself. Meanwhile, she had lined up three hours of academic tutoring four days a week, justifying it by saying, "Without the tutor, he won't do anything."

Another parent, when faced with the college choices presented by his daughter's college counselor, looked at the list derisively and said, "I expected so much more from my daughter." And a dear friend, when being dropped off at college, had her mother anxiously blurt out, "I don't know how you're going to handle college without me!" Presumably, she believed that her daughter had been successful in high school, and earned admission to the college of her dreams, only because of the help she had given

her. These hypervigilant parenting approaches are widely accepted and yet not effective at raising an independent human being.

The name of your college is not the determinant of your career success, earnings, relationships and happiness, especially if you are already wealthy. Many people describe college as “*the* gateway to success.” We would do well to broaden that to help kids think of college as “*a* gateway to success.”

As parents, as educators, as citizens, we should want all children to be as educated as possible. It is good for them and good for our society to not leave talent untapped or potential undeveloped. But today we are seeing more kids faltering or falling off the path, often because of stress disorders. If kids want to grind for an elite school, that’s cool. But it’s the fallacious sense that they have to that causes so much stress and, in the case of the Varsity Blues college admission scandal, mayhem.

Perhaps surprisingly to many parents, I’ve helped kids do better on school tests and standardized tests alike by lowering their stress and their perceived importance of the test. Feeling that you must do something that feels impossible impairs performance. So we can improve performance, lower stress, improve mental health and do less damage to our relationships with the young people we care so much about by de-emphasizing tests as the end-all and be-all.

One of the most empowering messages you can deliver to a student is, “I have confidence in your ability to make good decisions and, if things don’t work out as you planned, to figure things out from there.”

If our kids cannot apply to college without some extrajudicial parental involvement, or deal with possible rejection, I submit it is we, not they, who have failed the test of preparing for college