



Herndon Youth Soccer

Where to Start??

The College List:

Student-athletes have a lot of decisions to make when looking for a college or university that is the best fit for them academically and athletically. There are a number of factors that need to be considered by any student when choosing the right school including campus size, location, majors offered, available extracurricular activities, and available special programs and costs. As an athlete it is tempting to only consider the athletic opportunities at the school when making your decision, but there are a number of additional important factors that need to be considered as well.

Facing the reality that the majority of student-athletes do not continue to play their sport after graduation, you need to be sure that the school you choose is helping you build a strong foundation in the career you are looking to pursue as well as providing the resources available to assist you in finding a job after college.

- Consider how competitive the school is in the career field you are choosing and if you haven't decided what major you are going to pursue; consider how many options the school offers for you related to your interests.
- Most importantly, consider whether you would be happy attending the school if you were unable to play your sport of choice. If there comes a day when you are unable to continue playing for any number of reasons, you have to consider how happy you would be in the school and social environments.
- Remember not to limit yourself or your potential for future success just because of your first impression of the athletic facilities or program.



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Parents' Role!

All parents want to provide the best opportunities for their teenage children as they move into the next stage of their educational and athletic careers. It is important for parents to understand that there is a right way to assist their children through the athletic recruiting process.

Give your teens support, guidance and time, but don't try to manage the college application process for them. As a parent you need to be there for support, and to make sure that applications are done and requirements are met, but the worst case scenario is when parents insert themselves so far into the process that it becomes a nuisance for the coach and this can actually end up hurting your child's chance for an opportunity at particular colleges or universities. Just as the student wants a good fit, so does the coach. The coach may deem that a relationship of four or more years with an intrusive parent won't work. Encourage your child to speak with the coaches, build relationships and promote themselves.

With support from your child's school counselor, create a college application plan. Keeping track of all the steps in the recruiting and college application process can be daunting. Sit down with your child's counselor to create a step by step plan with important dates. Include everything from college application deadlines, NCAA regulations and financial aid deadlines to creating recruiting videos and contacting coaches.

Instill qualities of confidence, dedication, effort and work ethic into your child; but make sure your child does not come off as arrogant. A braggart can be destructive to the team dynamic and if the coach sees signs, it could be a big turn-off. Coaches also want to see that the student is coachable, that the student will take direction, make adjustments and be flexible based on circumstances. So, beyond just how they perform as competitors, the best athletes have the ability to represent themselves in a confident manner but also demonstrate a strong work ethic and commitment to improvement.

Keep your child motivated toward academic pursuits. If there is the perception that their skills will take them all the way, students can lose touch with the importance of pursuing their goals outside of athletics. Coaches recruit students who are dedicated to success in all parts of their lives. Make sure your student-athlete understands that success in the classroom is just as important as success on the playing field.