



COLLEGE PLANNING MINUTES

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Scoping Out Summer Programs



As I write this, bundled up in my warmest sweater, it doesn't seem as though summer is around the corner, but it is, and it's time to start thinking about how your teenager will spend it. One possibility is a residential summer program. These can provide a great opportunity for your high school student to access enrichment opportunities outside your local community at the same time as he is learning to get himself up in the morning and wash his own clothes.

Where to Look

One good resource is the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) Summer Camp database. Go to www.nagc.org, click on Parents and then on Summer Camps and Programs.

Some of the programs require that students meet high academic standards, but many don't. You'll find options ranging from schools offering enrichment courses to travel abroad, outdoor adventures in the

wilderness or summer in New York City. There's even an archeology field school and an astronaut training camp. Be aware, though, that these programs are not necessarily endorsed by NAGC; they're just listed for your convenience.

An even larger selection of summer programs, including those in the arts, athletics, and anything else you can imagine, is at www.petersons.com, listed under K-12 Schools and Programs.

What to Look For

- *Is it safe?*

Once you find an interesting prospect, how do you evaluate it? It would come as no surprise to my children to learn that the first thing I looked for was the safety of the physical environment and the planned activities as well as the level of supervision of students.

- *Is it fun?*

Hopefully, your child has been working hard at school and activities all year, so summer should be a time for relaxation and fun. Review possible programs with your child and find the ones she's enthusiastic about.

- *Is it affordable?*

A select few programs, like the Summer Governor's Schools and Boys and Girls State, are free, but are also usually very competitive. Costs for the rest can range from modest to very expensive, so check the price before selling your son on the idea of studying marine biology off the coast of France.

Spending a few weeks away from home will reassure most kids and their parents that they will be fine on their own at college. And if kids do have adjustment problems in the summer, they'll have time to address them before freshman year.

Find Summer Programs at:

www.nagc.org

www.petersons.com