

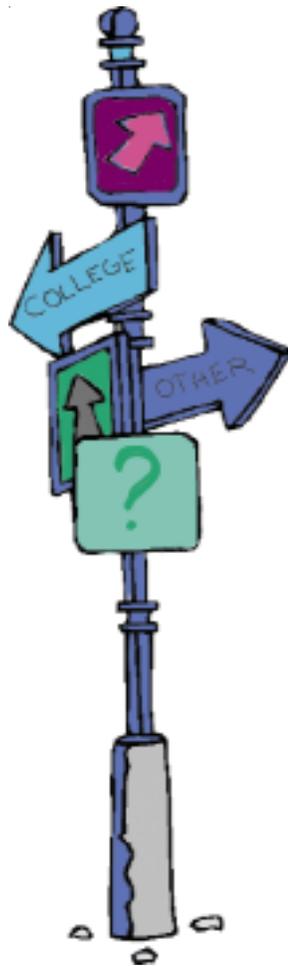
Gap-Year Opportunities When Teens Take a Year Off Between High School and College

In Europe, many teens take a year off between high school and college. They call it a “gap year.”

Taking a gap year is not as popular in America. The idea is catching on, however, as students learn about advantages of taking a year off before starting college.

Many teens use gap years to improve their chances of getting into a college of their choice. Here are some options to consider when planning a gap year for your student.

1. **Study** at home or abroad. Teach the English language in China. Learn a new language while working a foreign country. Take some art courses in Italy. Take classes to become a nursing assistant or EMT. Check on scholarships and fees.



2. **Travel**. Stay in the United States or travel abroad. Research these opportunities very carefully. It might be better to use a gap year service when considering travel outside the United States. Check on insurance coverage for illness, accidents and thefts. Find out about a visa, vaccination and work requirements.

3. **Work**. Try to find a job in an area of interest. Work in a hospital or clinic. Search for a job that will look good on a resume. Help your teen learn how to save money.

4. **Volunteer**. Volunteer work can be local or abroad. Find a trustworthy organization that places volunteers. Help build homes for the disadvantaged. Sometimes living and travel expenses are provided.

5. **Try a combination of the above**. You may want to divide the year with different experiences each quarter.

Encourage your teen to keep a journal of her experiences, jobs or studies. They will become an important part of her resume for college and for work.

Call the Parent Help Line. We listen. We can find you help.
1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week.