

Tips for Parents and Players

Understand Who Is Responsible:

Many families falsely assume that their high school coach or club soccer coach are responsible for their child's recruiting process. However, the recruiting process is ultimately *your* responsibility.

You are responsible for:

- Researching and evaluating schools
- Contacting college coaches
- Visiting schools and making decisions along the way

Your coaches may help with the process by determining where your skills fit in with different college levels and programs, writing recommendations, and even placing phone calls on your behalf to college coaches after you have initiated contact.

Be Proactive:

Now that you know the process is your responsibility, it's important to be proactive and research as many schools as possible. The recruiting and college selection process is not something that should sneak up on you senior year. Success in recruiting is about matching up your academic talents, athletic talents, and desires with a given college program. The families that come the closest to finding an athletic, academic, and social match are the ones who usually have the best success in the recruiting process. They have already done much of the work for the college coach, and the coach has confidence in recruiting a smart and talented athlete who wants to attend their school. There are over 1,100 NCAA colleges at the D1, D2, and D3 level, and 500+ Junior College and NAIA schools.

Don't Follow the Herd:

Many students put themselves in a position to fail by only applying to popular schools. The problem is that everyone is applying to these schools and competition for admission is extremely difficult. Harvard annually receives over 20,000 applications and admits roughly 10% of applicants each year. Despite your academic record, Harvard is going to turn down over 18,000 students each year, some of them being incredibly smart and gifted students. Make sure to do your research on all different types of schools as there are many quality ones out there.

Be Realistic:

The love, time, money, and passion you have poured into your son or athletic career can often cloud your judgment of their potential for a college scholarship. Most parents are not realistic about the chances of receiving athletic scholarship money. While your talents may garner some athletic scholarship money, after D1 football and basketball, there is very little scholarship money to go around. Most coaches, even at the D1 level, have a limited amount of money for their team that they divide up amongst 10-20 players. *There is far more money in the form of grants, merit aid, outside scholarships, institutional aid, and federal financial aid, than there is athletic scholarship money.* You need to explore your options at all programs at all levels, and not focus your search solely on an athletic scholarship. You also need to seek out people that can give you a realistic evaluation of your son or daughters ability and how it applies to different levels. Ultimately, only a college coach can determine whether or not you can play for them.

Be Educated:

There are a lot of confusing topics and terms that you will come across in the recruiting process: official visits, red shirts, scholarships, head- count sports, NLI, Clearinghouse, Dead period, and so on.

Your job is to learn the basics, understand your role in the recruiting process, understand how coaches recruit and what they look for, and understand what admission departments and schools look for. It's not about rules; it's about understanding and working with the process.