**10 Common Mistakes Made During High School**

1. **Believing your freshman year doesn’t really count and you can improve your grades later-** If you slack off your first year, it will be really hard to catch up later. Don’t forget: Your freshman year grades count toward your overall grade point average as much as your grades in later years, and you want that GPA to be high to better qualify you for college admissions.
2. **Sacrificing your grades for your social life-** You should definitely have a rich social life in high school, but that doesn’t mean you can’t get good grades too. Good grades are your ticket to getting into great colleges and universities, which in turn gives you more career choice and opportunities. Remember that while high school may seem like forever, it’s only four years, but the college you choose and your subsequent career affects the rest of your life.
3. **Skipping classes and missing homework-** Homework assignments help you learn the subject matter, which is not only important for your GPA, it can also help you when you take standardized tests like the SAT or ACT.
4. **Failing to make up missed assignments-** There is a huge benefit in doing assignments, even if you’re turning them in late: You are more likely to retain the material.
5. **Not signing up for extracurricular activities**- When you start your search to find a college, you’ll see that they look for well-rounded students who did extracurricular activities along with a challenging academic program. The best careers today are highly competitive and they require people to be able to multi-task. It’s better to be dedicated and active in a few activities than to make little effort in several.
6. **Deciding that high school is about dances, partying, and sports, not classes-** Even though social activities are an important part of high school, they shouldn’t be your main focus during the school day.
7. **Not asking questions in class-** They say the only stupid question is the one that isn’t asked. You’re not going to have all the answers, and you’re not going to get them unless you are willing to ask questions.
8. **Taking classes just because your friends are taking them-** It can be fun to be in all the same classes as your friends, but it can also be a distraction. Also, your friends may have different interests, academic skills and college goals than you do. So if you’re interested in classes that your friends aren’t, take them. You just might make some new friends, and you’ll be one step closer to getting into colleges of your dreams.
9. **Not developing your writing skills-** Not only will improving your writing skills help with your college applications- primarily the all important essay portion- but it will also help you in college with essays, tests and later, job applications and cover letters. If possible, consider taking AP English or a creative writing course. By the time college application season hits, you’ll be ready to write a stellar essay that will set you apart from the rest.
10. **Neglecting your physical health-** Teen agers require 9 hours of sleep in order to function properly during school. Inadequate nutrition and lack of physical exercise negatively affects academic performance and attention span.