

Still Waiting? :What to do when your Child Lands on the College Wait List.

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**By Monica Wheeler**

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After sorting through brochures, helping tailor the perfect essay, and juggling schedules to attend college nights, and campus visits, you await the answer to the all-important question. Did your senior make the grade for their top choice school? Unfortunately, when the letter of truth arrives it doesn't offer ?congratulations? or ?regretfully inform.? Your child has been cordially invited to the ?wait list.?

While most parents prepare their child for acceptance or outright rejection, today?s competitive environment includes a wild card. Even honor students with 4.0 GPA?s, 1460 SAT scores, numerous activities, and full scholarships from competing universities land on waiting lists. Since students now apply to a laundry list of schools, and many factors influence an applicants? decision it has become difficult for institutions to accurately project who will accept their offer. Admissions Officers rely on wait lists as insurance policies.

Helping your child decide what college to attend isn?t easy. Add a wait list to the mix and the difficult process can become downright confusing. ?Typically, these wait list decisions are made on a March to April time frame.? explains Al Newell, the Dean of enrollment at Washington & Jefferson College in Washington, PA. He advises students to preserve another option for themselves if they are wait listed, ?By May 1, traditionally the national deposit date, wait-listed students should have a deposit at some other place. They should most definitely make sure they have another choice,? Newell advises. ?I would be the first to encourage them to make a deposit elsewhere if they were on my wait-list, because if I put them on that list, I?m telling them there is no guarantee

So, what steps should be taken if faced with a wait list dilemma?

First, assess the situation. According to Jim Bekkering, the Vice President for Admissions at Hope College in Holland, MI, the student and their parents should seriously decide how badly they want to be at that particular college. If this is the school of choice, make certain your student finds the facts.

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Encourage them to politely call and ask the admissions office how many students are on the wait list, how many wait-listed students were admitted in the previous two years, and whether the wait list has been put into an order of preference. Also, find out what factors will be taken into account in deciding whom to accept from the list. This should give you a general sense of the chances of being chosen. Once you both clearly understand the process, decide on a timeframe, explains Bekkering, "The stronger the desire is, the longer they should be willing to wait. It should be decided by each individual family."

Next, write a letter to the admissions office immediately after receiving notice of being wait listed. Dr. Robert J. Massa, Vice President for Enrollment and Student Life at Dickinson College in Carlisle, suggest the student write a letter to the Director of Admissions explaining exactly why they believe the college is best for them. The applicant should "outline why they think the college is the perfect match for them –their learning style, their style of interaction, and their educational objectives. Show that they

know the college and that they know themselves. Tell the admissions director why the college will be a better place if they were there. If there is an opening, and the student does this, they will stand a better chance of getting in."

Most importantly, don't take the final decision as a personal insult. Colleges differ in how they take students from the wait list for admission. Sabena B. Moretz, Associate Director of Admission at the University of Richmond, explains, "Some will admit the student who calls them every day because they believe that student is the most likely to enroll. Others admit student athletes, star musicians or students with particular personal qualities that the school needs."

Instead, play the cards that are dealt. Help your child prepare for the second choice school. It can't hurt to stay on a wait list, but if you're son or daughter is waitlisted at one institution, the odds are great they've been accepted somewhere very similar. Allow yourself and your child to become excited about where they've been accepted. No matter the outcome, the college selection process should remain a positive experience.

Monica Wheeler is a national– award– winning freelance writer, who has helped thousands of parents and students prepare for university admissions. For "35 Practical Ways to Get Money for College" visit <http://www.cashforcollege.bizhosting.com>

### **Interview Preparation, Tips And Advice**

**By Jonathan Mayheart**

This article provides some information about preparation for the college interview, the waiting room, mental preparation, questions and things to ask and dressing for the college interview.

The college waiting room - you really have nothing to say or exchange in the waiting room, stay focused at the target and the college interview, you don't have to go over your resume or application at the waiting room, but think of how perfect you are for this college, that you can't wait to get in there and

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explain to these people that they just found their dream applicant.

Going over as many college profiles as you can will also give you a very big picture, college profiles are the windows into the possible future, you can spend some time researching and learning the different college profiles. College admissions is a very important point, you will need to get to know every college admissions procedure, for your own benefits, you will be surprised to learn that there are differences in college admissions, and that admissions in general is a huge research topic. Don't be shy, ask all what you need to know about college admissions, maybe there is a college admissions person that will be happy to clear a lot of the college admissions terms.

Another point to remember is that you are still in high school. Focus on your classes, activities, friends, and family. Take time to relax. Any period of intense work requires time for relaxation and reflection.

Mock interview - prepare by having friends or relatives interview you, rehearse the answers that you give, listen to criticism regarding your answer, how fast you talk, the gestures you make while taking. All these can help you be better prepared and not surprised or shocked the day of your college interview. Remember that you also need to keep in mind the college profile, and remember who you are talking with.

Prepare your own list of questions to ask - prepare questions regarding the courses, the program, college rules, and general college life, to show that you are serious about actually going to this college. If you have good questions you also have a good chance of impressing the interviewer by showing you have initiative and that you also have some criteria for the place you will be spending the next few years in.

Dress in advance - have your outfit ready a couple of days before the college interview, know what you will have on, and choose items that you like and that make you feel good.

Final word - remember that these are only people that are sitting on the other side of that table, they were once like you, going to college, filling in endless application forms and getting ready for interviews. Making a mistake does not mean that it's the end of the line for you, you can always show that you have the ability to land on your feet, to acknowledge your mistakes and to go on, in spite of making an evident mistake here and there, these are mature people who will appreciate it, they are looking for someone who will fight to get a chance, and that will not crack under pressure, if you had something go wrong in the interview - get to work on repairing the damage immediately, do not wait, do not delay the thoughts for the night, but react and recover, say something honest and funny, show willingness to work things out and solve them by hard work, but never, never, give up. Good luck!.

Jonathan Mayheart, specializing in BioData, has been studying and researching interviews. He recently wrote a few articles for

providing tips and advice

regarding college interviews for students and college applicants.

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