

BIG DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

Did you know that there are many differences between the high school and college experiences? Adult supporters need to be equipped to make these differences clear to youth, so that youth know what to expect. A youth could dislike high school but love college. Here is a partial list of differences between high school and college, to help start conversations with youth.

	High School	College
1. Schedule Flexibility	High schools have fixed schedules and class times.	College has flexible schedules, and students can plan their schedules to fit their needs. Some classes may be offered online, on Saturdays, or in the evening.
2. Breadth of Classes	High school has a limited number of classes and educational paths from which to choose. Additionally, each school typically has only one format for each class.	Colleges provide a much wider variety of classes to choose from, including vocational training, making it easier to find classes on topics in which a student is interested. Additionally, depending on the college and field of study, class formats can vary widely, including those that are completely lecture, those that require hands-on work, and those that are based on discussions. Students can often pick a format that best matches their learning style.
3. Personal Responsibility	In high school, students are assigned the core courses that they need to take.	In college, students can pick their own major, and it is up to the student to read, understand, and complete the assigned materials for the courses needed for that major. There is much more flexibility in course selection.

<p>4. Classroom Hours</p>	<p>In high school, students go directly from one class to the next, spending about 6 hours a day (30 hours a week) in class.</p>	<p>In college, class times vary throughout the day, and students may have hours between classes. Students typically spend 15–20 hours a week in class. Additionally, students can choose what size of a class load to take, from part time to full time.</p>
<p>5. Customization to Personal Goals</p>	<p>In high school, classes are arranged for the student by the school.</p> <p>High school attempts to impart core knowledge to minors and younger learners.</p>	<p>In college, students choose their own classes—in consultation with their advisor—based on their educational and career goals. Students are in charge of their own time and choices. College is geared toward young adult learners and is a place for students to tailor-make their experience.</p>
<p>6. Extracurricular Opportunities</p>	<p>In high school, students need permission to participate in extracurricular activities.</p>	<p>In college, there are many opportunities for extracurricular activities, including clubs and sports teams. It is up to the student to decide whether to participate.</p>
<p>7. The Ability to Self-Identify</p>	<p>In high school, youth are automatically identified by the school as foster youth to access foster-youth-specific benefits and supports.</p>	<p>In college, youth have the option to self-identify as a foster youth to access foster-youth-specific benefits and supports.</p>
<p>8. The Ability to Make New Relationships</p>	<p>In high school, all students are required to attend school.</p>	<p>In college, students choose to attend and have the opportunity to connect with other like-minded peers.</p>