



Embarking on the College Quest

How the Why leads to the What & Where

Introductions



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Expectations

- Who** This presentation will provide engaging ideas and actionable tools for parents and students in all stages of their college quest.
- What** Learn how the **Why** leads to the **What** and **Where**.
- When** Learn when to use the tools and activities...
- Where** to help your student create a list of great fit colleges...
- Why** so they have college choices they love and where they will succeed and thrive.

Why College?



College is a huge investment of effort, time, and money

Parents and students consider...

Why are you willing to invest this much money in a college education?

Students think about...

Why are you willing to work hard academically after high school to earn a certain degree?

Why are you going to leave your family and friends to move 300 miles away to sleep in a single bed and share a 300-sq foot room?

Why are you going to stay up until 3 am eating coffee grounds in prep for a differential equations or British Lit exam?

your **Why** will lead to your **What** & **Where**

Why College Considerations



I'm not sure what I want to study and I want to explore options

I want to make more/new friends

I want to improve my potential career earnings

I want to keep playing a certain sport

I want to engage intellectually with peers and professors

I want to have hands-on internship opportunities

I don't have anything better to do

My parents insist

I want to be with my friends

I want the college-residential life experience

I want to be exposed to different kinds of people/perspectives/worldviews

I want to have fun

I want the personal challenge

I want to see a different part of the country

I want to contribute to society, to better humankind

I enjoy learning

I want to be independent

Why College Activity



A family exercise:

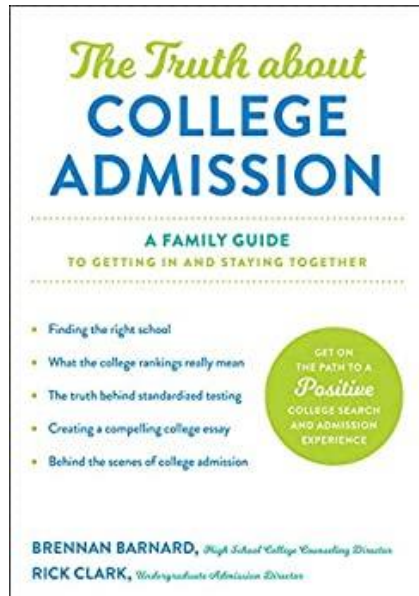
- Parents and Teens each write down your Why College answer - independently and privately.
- Share, compare, and discuss.
- Be open to each other's perspectives. Parents, remember this is your child's process.
- What did you learn? Were you aligned? Were you surprised? Do you need to compromise?

Why College Resources



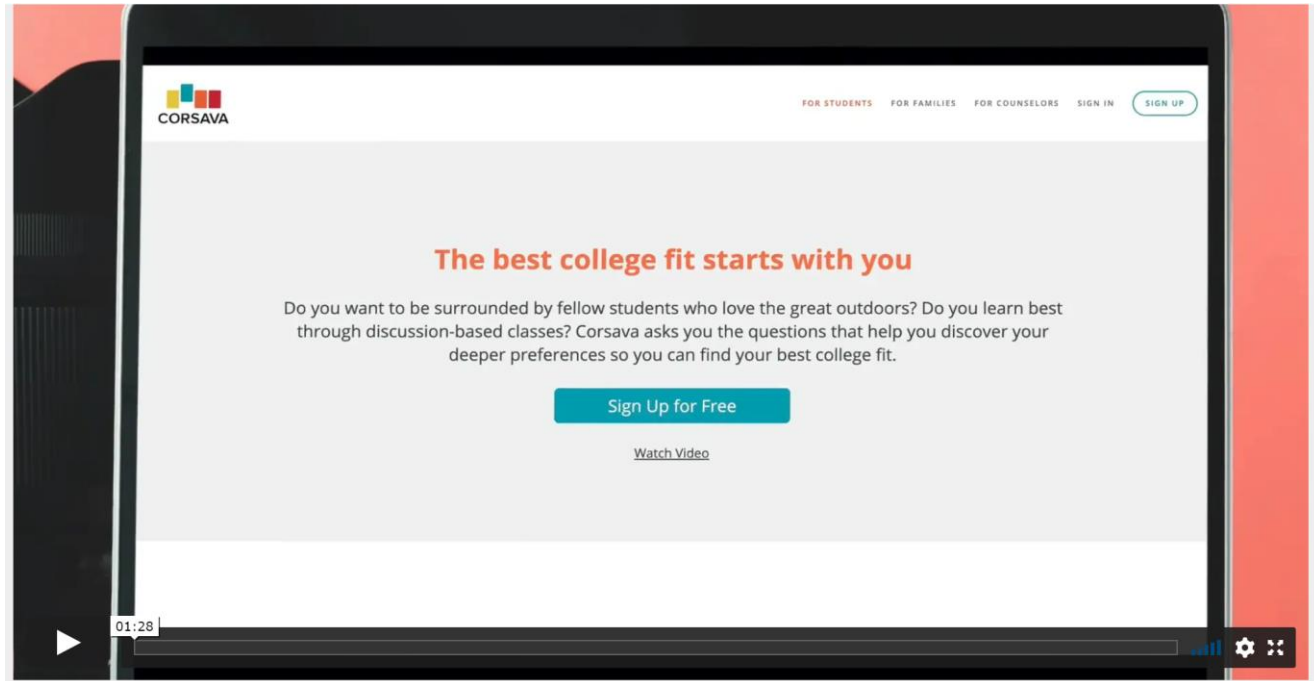
Additional Resources:

- [Why College?](#) Family Guide from Touchstone College Advising
- Dr. Steven Antonoff has developed a great values assessment to help students **identify**, and **interpret**, their main goals for their college experience. Access his values assessment and other useful worksheets [online](#), or purchase his book, *College Match: A Blueprint for Choosing the Best School for You*
- *The Truth about College Admission: A Family Guide to Getting in and Staying Together* by Rick Clark & Brennan Barnard



What is Corsava?

Click the image below to link to a short summary video



The Card Sort

The Corsava Card Sort is designed to introduce students to a broad scope of college characteristics, encouraging them to think beyond name recognition, size, and location. For each characteristic, students indicate a preference of “Must Have,” “Would Be Nice,” “Do Not Care,” or “No Way.”

Sort Overview

Each card represents a unique characteristic of the college experience, with definitions to help you explore your choices.



Select what you “Must Have,” what “Would Be Nice,” things you “Don’t Care” about, and those characteristics that are a “No Way.” Don’t worry if you aren’t sure about a choice; you can change your selections later.



Must Have



Would Be Nice



Do Not Care



No Way

Select your preferences >

Card Categories

The cards are divided into the following color-coded categories.

Academics

Focuses on the academic opportunities that are important to the student, including specific majors, such as business, English, or biology

Extracurricular Activities

How students want to get involved outside of the classroom and which clubs and activities they prefer

Campus Culture

A reflection of the campus social culture and what's important to the student body, such as whether students are outdoorsy, creative, full of school spirit, etc.

Residential Life

A student's preference for their residential experience, surrounding communities, on-campus housing and dining, and weather

Educational Culture

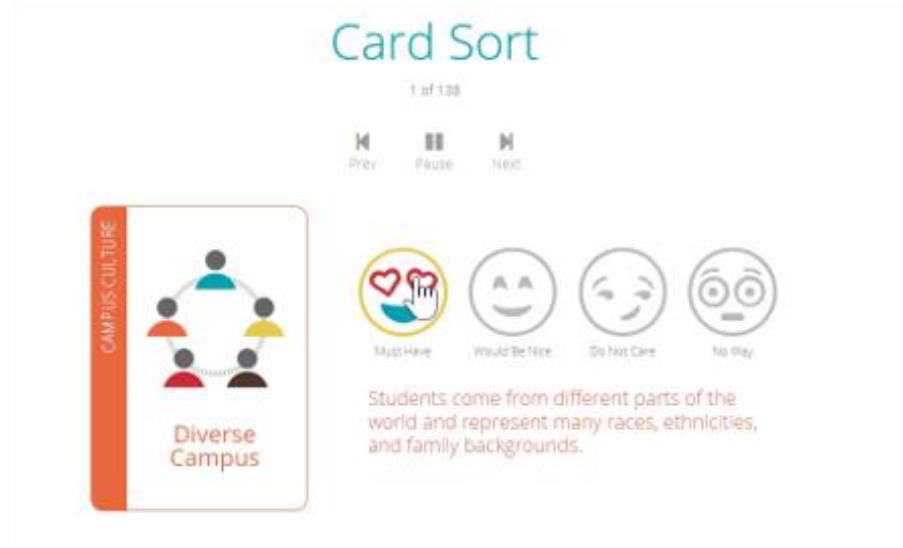
How students learn best, what type of structure they prefer, and their preference for the type of student interaction that occurs in the classroom and study groups

Student Resources

Helps students identify their preference for support--discovering their major interest and career paths, connecting with professors, and getting necessary accommodations for learning differences or disabilities

The Card Sort

When a student starts a card sort, they will be presented with a digital image representing the card, the four preference emojis, and a definition of the card. The cards appear in a random order, so no two card sort experiences are the same.



Account Set Up



Both student and parent/guardian accounts are free to set up and use!

To get started, ask your student to go to www.corsava.com and navigate to the Sign Up page.

Once their account is set up, they can [invite you](#) to set up your own Corsava account. Your accounts will automatically be linked together.

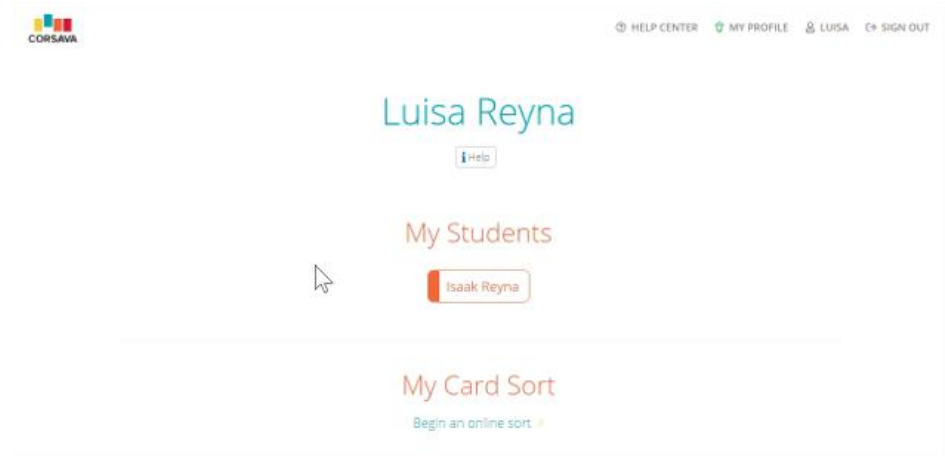
CORSAVA FOR STUDENTS

- Complete the Corsava Card Sort and get a Corsava Report
- Connect your account with a counselor and/or family member
- Create and customize your list of top colleges
- Give your impressions and keep notes as you research and visit colleges
- Get a ranked list of your colleges, based on your impressions

FREE

Family Connections

- Parents/guardians can do their own card sort, make their own college list, and track their own impressions in their Corsava account.
- Parents/guardians may **view** the information in their student's account, but they are not able to **edit** anything.
- Check out our **Resources for Families** in order to **get the most out** of your Corsava experience.



Card Sort Activities for Families

Together

1. Have your student log in to their Corsava account.
2. Either sit together, viewing the same screen or, if you are not in the same location, use an online meeting platform that allows for screen sharing and have your student share their screen.
3. Your student should start a new card sort.
4. The cards will be presented in a random order. Encourage your student to ask questions and talk through their thought process as they record their preferences for each characteristic.
5. Again, this is about your student's college preferences, not yours. Resist the urge to take over the mouse, keyboard, etc. - let your student lead the way.
6. Your student can edit their preferences at any time, either by editing this card sort or doing a completely new sort. As they explore their options, they will likely discover some characteristics matter more or less to them than they originally thought. Keep the conversation open by checking in often.

Card Sort Activities for Families

Individually

1. Your student completes their online card sort.
2. You complete your own card sort, separately.
3. Swap reports. Printing out hard copies of your respective reports makes swapping and reviewing relatively easy.
4. Come together to talk over the similarities and differences between your priorities.

After the Card Sort – Comparing Card Sorts



Conversation Tips:

- The most successful transitions to college entail a student taking ownership of the process and parents walking alongside, offering support and guidance without taking over. Whenever possible, let your student lead the conversation.
- Celebrate the common ground. Adolescence is full of conflict (right?), take the time to celebrate the characteristics everyone agrees on.

After the Card Sort – Comparing Card Sorts



- Curiosity reigns supreme - are you surprised by any of your student's Must Have preferences? Aim to ask neutral questions to better understand their choices, especially if they differ from what you expected.
- Don't focus on reaching consensus or closure. This dialogue will be ongoing. As the conversation continues and college research progresses, both you and your student are likely to have some priority shifts. Enjoy learning about each other, with each other.

After the Card Sort – Comparing Card Sorts



- Be open to truly hearing what your student is saying they want and need. This is their college experience, not yours.
- Look for patterns on your report and theirs. Is there one color that has more Must Have cards than others? Which color has the fewest? How do your colors differ from your student's? (e.g., are many of the student's Must Have cards **orange/Campus Culture**?) Ask yourselves, do the colors/categories dominating the Must Haves correspond with my student's Why College values/priorities?

After the Card Sort – Comparing Card Sorts

Here's an example of a student who's Must Haves are dominated by Educational Culture cards.



MUST HAVE

Engineering

Liberal Arts

Diverse Campus

LGBTQ+ Friendly

Co-op Programs

Hands-on Learning

Learn by Reading

Small Classes

Unstructured Program

Access to Professors

Merit Aid Scholarships

After the Card Sort – Conversation Starters

Some questions to get the conversations started (not an exhaustive list!):

Regarding Must Haves:

- Can you tell me about why you chose [insert card title here]?
- If you spot cards that appear to conflict with one another (ex: Rural College & Urban College or One of a Crowd & Big Fish in a Little Pond), ask your student to talk through why they chose each card and help them see why one may exclude the other.

Regarding No Ways:

- What about [insert card title here] does not appeal to you?

Were there any cards you struggled to place? How did you decide where to put them?

After the Card Sort – Conversation Starters

Consider a No Way card

- What might be the benefits? Brainstorm what the benefits might be...
- Play Devil's Advocate - Would any of the benefits apply to you?
- Is it still a No Way? Even if the card remains in the No Way pile, this activity ensures you and your student have considered all the options and all the angles.

For example:

Many students reject the **Rural Campus** card.

Some benefits of a Rural Campus might include:

Access to the outdoors, sports like hiking and skiing, a sense of getting away from it all, ability to focus, small town charm, tight knit community, less expensive, guaranteed campus housing...

After the Card Sort – Reflections to Share



- Think back to when you were in high school and what your post-secondary decision process was like. Share with your student your memories from this time. What was exciting for you? What was disappointing? How did your decisions then lead to where you are now?
- Looking back on your own post-secondary experiences, finish this sentence: “I wish I had...”

After the Card Sort – Reflections to Share

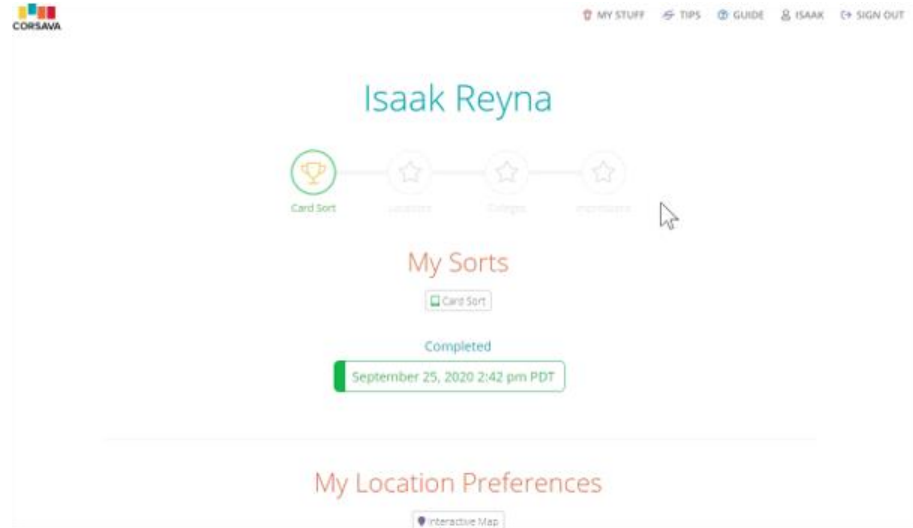


- Encourage your student to talk to other trusted adults (extended family, friends, coaches, teachers, mentors, etc.) about their post-secondary experiences.
- Reflect on your Why College Priorities -- do the Must Haves and Would Be Nice cards align? For example, if a goal is to get a good job -- what pile did the Career Advising and Internships cards end up in?

Location Preferences

If the card sort helps you define your What and align it with your Why, then Locations, Colleges, & Impressions take you from your What to your Where.

Does your student have a strong preference (for or against) a particular state or region? They can record their preferences on Corsava's [Interactive Map](#)



College Lists/Impressions

There are a lot of resources out there to help students and their families build college lists. You can find more guidance for list building on our Corsava [Resources](#) page.

Once their initial list is built, it will need refinement before students start working on their applications. Researching their Must Have and Would Be Nice cards at each of the colleges on their list can help students prioritize and eliminate schools. This process gives students more insight into what they like, what they don't like, and what they need. It is expected that their preferences will change, resulting in both an updated card sort and an updated college list. [Recording their impressions](#) in Corsava will result in a personalized ranking of their list, an invaluable tool for both applications and making final decisions.



MY STUFF TIPS GUIDE ISAAC SIGN OUT

Isaak Reyna



Card Sort



10
Locations



Colleges



Impressions

My Sorts

Card Sort

Completed

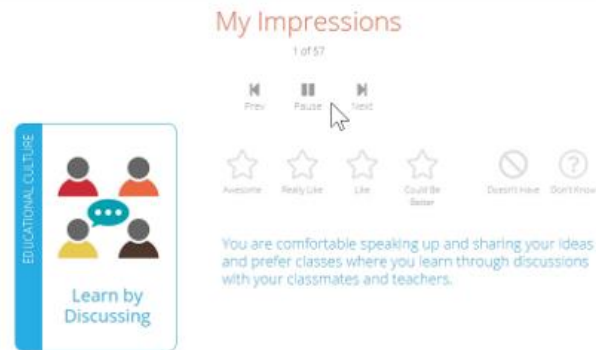
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My Location Preferences

College Lists/Impressions: Pro Tip!

Must Have and Would Be Nice cards will initially be presented in random order, similar to the card sort. Rather than rate each card as it appears, I recommend clicking straight through without recording any impressions. At the end, click “yes.” Now the impressions are organized into a report organized by priority and listed in alphabetical order. This makes finding and rating a specific card much easier! Notes can be added and ratings can be adjusted as necessary.

You might not want to research and rate EVERY Must Have and Would Be Nice card. Some counselors have students focus solely on their Must Have category. Others will do the Must Have category and the “top 5” Would Be Nice cards. Whatever works best for you and your teen is great! Just be sure to be consistent between schools. This will ensure the personalized ranking is valid.



What's Next?



Why Explore Your Why

- [Why College Family Guide](#)

What Identify Your College Priorities

- Set up a Corsava account
- Complete the Corsava Card Sort Activity
- Discuss

Where Build & Research Your College List

- [College Priorities: The Key to a Great College List](#)
- [Your College List](#)
- [Refining Your College List](#)

Contact Info



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