

How to Understand the Benefits of All Girls Schools

Single-sex education can have enormous benefits for its students, especially women. While you may initially balk at the idea of attending an all girls school or a women's college, a number of studies have shown that women who attend...

Part 1 of 3:

Researching Single-Sex Education

1.



Embrace an equal opportunity education. Many students and parents select all-girls schools because they encourage women to enter fields that have been traditionally dominated by men, such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). In co-ed schools, boys are often expected to enter these fields whereas girls are often expected to succeed only in the humanities or the arts.^[1]

1. Girls who graduate from single-sex schools are three times more likely to become engineers than girls who attend co-ed schools.^[2]
2. In a 2013 study, science faculty at six leading research universities were asked to assess the resumes of potential students they could mentor. The resumes were identical, with the exception of one being named "John" and the other "Jennifer." The faculty members overwhelmingly favored the male student, rating him as more competent and hireable than the female applicant based on nothing other than his gender.^[3]

2.



Eliminate bias against girls in the classroom. Studies have indicated that in co-ed settings, male students are often preferred over female students. For instance, studies have shown that teachers are far more likely to praise and give in-depth responses to a boy's comments in class whereas they might only acknowledge a girl's comments with a nod or a quick response.^[4]

1. In co-ed settings, teachers are also more likely to encourage male students to work through problems on their own, while they tend to step in and help female students who struggle with a problem.
2. In an all girls setting, girls are far more likely to speak up frequently and make significant contributions to class than in a co-ed setting.
3. Girls studying in a single sex setting also earn higher scores on their College Board and Advanced Placement exams than girls who study in co-ed settings.^[5]

3.



Enjoy a personalized education. All girls schools tend to be smaller than co-ed schools, which means your teachers will be able to tailor the material to your personal learning style and interests.

1. In a personalized setting, your teachers and professors will be able to write detailed letters of recommendation

4.



Research individual schools. If you are interested in attending an all-girls school for high school in the United States, you can find detailed rankings of them from websites such as Niche.^[6] You can find a directory of women's colleges at <http://www.womenscolleges.org>.

Part 2 of 3:

Learning From Single-Sex Graduates

1.



Talk to alumnae of the school or college. No amount of research will replace actually talking to graduates about the benefits of their school. Ask them questions about their experiences at the school and why they would recommend attending.

1. Many schools will have events where you can speak to alumnae and learn what kinds of career paths the graduates of their school have taken.

2.



Research notable women's college graduates. People such as Hillary Rodham Clinton, Meryl Streep, Gwen Ifill, Eudora Welty, Natasha Trethewey, and Gloria Steinem are all graduates of women's colleges.

1. Twenty-two percent of women in Congress are women's college graduates.

3.



Use your network. Alumnae of women's colleges tend to be very supportive of their school and their younger, fellow graduates. You will have a successful and powerful network in place after you graduate from your school.

Part 3 of 3:

Visiting A Single-Sex School

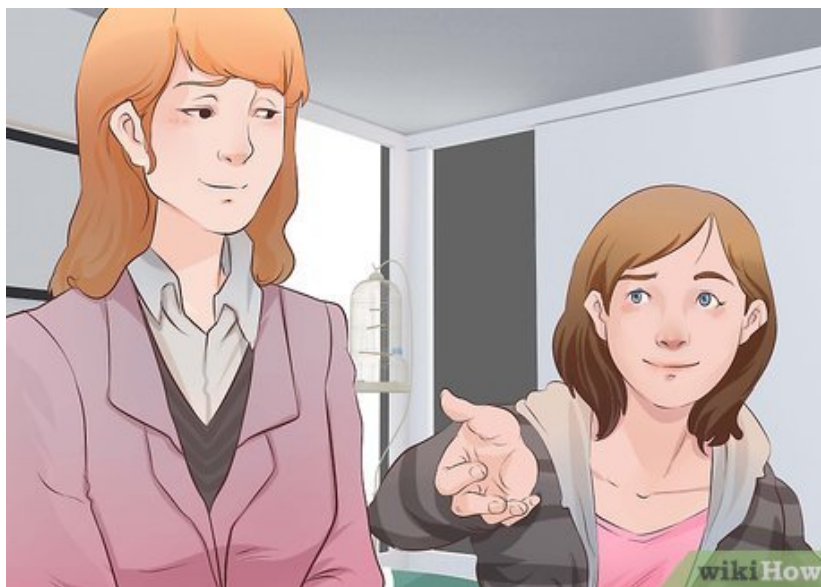
1.



Select a few schools to compare. When you are deciding upon a school to attend, you shouldn't just pick the first one you find. Instead, plan to visit at least a few options to compare the best one for you.

1. If your parents are encouraging you to attend a girls' school for high school, try to talk to other students who attended the school at their parents' urging. What do they think of it? Are they happy they came to the school?
2. If you are concerned about your dating prospects, remember that many girls' schools will have social events with local boys' schools or other private schools.

2.



Stay with a current student. Many girls' schools and women's colleges will have visiting weekends for prospective students. During these visits, you can generally stay with a student and experience life in the dorms and also attend a few classes. You should ask current students for their honest opinions about the school and why they wanted to attend it.

3.



Consider other factors. While the benefits of single-sex education are great, you should also consider other attributes of the school that might be important to you. Some of these might include:

1. Location. Is the school in a beautiful rural setting or a bustling city? In which setting will you be happiest?
2. Facilities. What are the buildings on campus like? What kind of labs or learning centers are available to students? Does it have a nice library, a theater or artistic space, a gym, etc.?
3. Career opportunities. This will be more of a priority if you pick a women's college. Does the school have a good career center? Do they support students in finding internships, externships and other opportunities?
4. Campus life. If it is a boarding school or residential college, you should see the types of dorms or apartments available for students. What kinds of activities happen on campus for students? Are there clubs or extracurricular could you participate in during your time there?

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