



Frequently Asked Questions:

1. What is my role as a parent?
 - **Be realistic:** Be honest about your child's abilities. Unrealistic expectations can cause significant stress. There is a spot for most motivated athletes, but it may not be at a Division I school.
 - **Manage the Financial Picture:** Discuss scholarship expectations early in the process, a significant majority of offers are not full rides but offer partial financial aid.
 - **Stay Organized:** Help track recruiting timelines, emails, visits, and eligibility requirements. Create a simple spreadsheet for: Coach contacts, Communication dates, Camp/visit schedules.
 - **Research and Guidance:** Help identify realistic college fits (academically, athletically, and financially). Understand the differences between NCAA Division I, II, III, NAIA, and JUCO opportunities. As a parent, you can assist your teen with researching colleges, finding teams on social media, locating rosters and stats, and understanding the program offerings.
 - **Serve as a sounding board:** Be an active listener for your child's frustrations and successes. Respect their wishes and understand that their priorities may shift.
 - **Know the Rules:** Know the **NCAA recruiting calendars**, eligibility requirements, and contact periods. Ensure your athlete registers with the **NCAA Eligibility Center**.¹
 - **Teach Professional Communication:** Guide your athlete in writing polite, short and direct emails and thank-you notes. Practice phone or video calls with coaches to build confidence when necessary. Proofread communications, but don't write them. We suggest helping them to be ready to leave phone messages to coaches also!
 - **Respond to everyone!** There are many reasons for this, such as courtesy or changing opinions. We experienced this multiple times with our son - college coaches change jobs! The coach of a school they are not interested in may end up coaching at a target school.
 - **Celebrate successes and manage disappointments:** Celebrate every achievement and offer your child support when things don't go their way. Remind them of their overall strengths.



- **Focus on Fit and Long-Term Goals:** Encourage your child to choose a school where they would be happy even without sports. Remind them: athletics can open the door, but education builds the future.
- **Help to plan travel arrangements:** This may include showcase camps and visits.
- **It's important for your child to lead communication and be the primary point of contact for coaches.**

2. When should I start the recruitment process?

There is no crystal ball answer as every athlete, every sport, and every location has its exceptions. Some kids mature faster than others and can get more exposure to 'national ranking' organizations and coaches. Some sports, such as women's volleyball, can tend to initiate the recruiting process faster than other sports, such as football, baseball, softball, track and others. Based on direct conversations with NCAA coaches, it is important to be prepared entering your junior year of high school when coaches can contact an athlete. Starting to generate a social media campaign and establishing relationships with college programs should begin in grade 9 or grade 10.

3. Does Athlete Advantage Parent Consulting work with all sports?

Definitely! Our strategy works for all sports, not just the Division 1 'headcount' sports of football, men's/women's basketball, women's volleyball, and gymnastics. The NCAA designates a sport as a 'headcount' sport as it allows full scholarships. There are a lot of other sports including soccer, tennis, ice & field hockey, track & field, baseball, rugby, golf, swimming, lacrosse at all levels (D1, D2, D3, NAIA, JUCO) that offer partial scholarships that can add up to huge sums of money well over 6 figures!

4. Is Athlete Advantage Parent Consulting just for parents?

No. The primary customer is the parent and the services are designed to help parents of student-athletes with the recruiting journey. However, we fully understand that sometimes the student athlete may want to have a conversation with one of us and we are happy to support in that way if the parent supports that approach. The student athlete is more than welcome to be involved and the best



outcomes generally will occur with a collective family approach. The recruiting process takes a significant portion of time nowadays and while young adults want some autonomy in their decision-making, they generally appreciate the support and experience of those they trust, their parents. It truly is a team effort.

5. What are the differences between NCAA Division 1, Division 2, Division 3, NAIA, and NJCAA, and how does Athlete Advantage 1 help athletes navigate these options?

Understanding the differences between NCAA Division 1, Division 2, Division 3, NAIA, and NJCAA (JUCO) is crucial for athletes aiming to pursue their athletic and academic goals at the collegiate level. Here's a breakdown of each:

NCAA Division 1: Known for the highest level of competition and larger schools, Division 1 schools offer the most scholarships and invest significantly in their athletic programs. These schools often have extensive athletic facilities and high visibility in sports.

NCAA Division 2: These schools offer a balance between competitive athletics, academics, and extracurricular involvement. Scholarships are available but are fewer compared to Division 1. Division 2 schools often have a more regional focus.

NCAA Division 3: Prioritizing academics, Division 3 schools do not offer athletic scholarships but may provide other forms of financial aid. The focus here is on the overall college experience, with a lower intensity in athletic competition compared to Divisions 1 and 2.

NAIA (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics): NAIA schools generally have smaller athletic programs than NCAA schools but still offer competitive sports and scholarships. This association emphasizes character-driven athletics.

NJCAA (National Junior College Athletic Association): NJCAA serves 2-year colleges, providing an opportunity for athletes to develop their skills, improve academically, and possibly transfer to 4-year institutions. Scholarships are available, and the level of competition can be quite high.

We help our clients understand the nuances of each division and association, ensuring they make informed decisions that align with their long-term goals. With our expertise, we aim to empower parents and elevate athletes by providing personalized consulting services tailored to their unique needs and aspirations.