Toolkit for School Counselors & Educators

#explorethegapyear
What is Gap Year Exploration Month?

Gap Year Exploration Month, celebrated annually in the month of February, is a shared initiative of educators, experiential education experts, program providers, industry groups and others who want to promote the benefits of a gap year.

Gap Year Exploration Month exists to:
* Provide information about gap year opportunities.
* Celebrate gap year students and alumni.
* Recognize the significant power and benefits of deliberate gap time.
* Increase community, business and governmental support for the gap year option.
* Educate schools, colleges & universities, students and parents about the gap year option.

Gap Year Exploration Month is entering its inaugural year in 2019, having evolved from the Gap Year Decision Day movement which began in 2017.
Why Promote Gap Years?

We want to see more young Americans launching successfully into adulthood. Gap year proponents believe that taking intentional time away from the “classroom” before accruing college debt, starting careers, and choosing a life-path helps to facilitate perspective, purpose, and maturation. The life-experience gained from a gap year sets students up for success in the real world. Recent data echoes the sentiment that purposeful gap time is beneficial to students.

Useful Gap Year Statistics:

* According to recent studies, gap year students perform better academically than traditional students once they arrive at college¹
* 90% of gap year students begin college within a year of starting their gap time²
* 88% of gap year graduates report that their gap year had significantly added to their employability³
* 98% of gap year graduates report their gap year helped them develop as a person and allowed valuable time for personal reflection⁰

¹ Research conducted by Bob Gagett. [Link](http://online.wsj.com)
² Milkround graduate recruitment Gap Year survey. [Link](http://www.milkroundonline.com)
³ 2015 National Alumni Survey conducted by Nina Hoe, PhD, in collaboration with the Institute for Survey Research, Temple University, and the GYA Research Committee
⁰ "Taking a gap year is a great opportunity for young people to broaden their horizons, making them more mature and responsible citizens.” - former U.K. Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw
2019 Educator Challenge: Gap Year Bulletin Board

- Promote your nearest Gap Year Fair
- Crowd source or list top gap year destinations
- Print and post infographics about planning and opportunities
- Print and post the official Gap Year Exploration Month logo to display
- Display stats about gap years
- Display posters and brochures from gap year programs
- Profile gap year alumni from your school

Logo and PDF Information sheets available for download at gapyearexplorationmonth.com
2019 Educator Challenge: Bulletin Board

We are encouraging school counselors and educators across the US to use their bulletin board space in February to educate students about the gap year option.

Suggested Bulletin Board Components:

* Gap Year Exploration Month Logo Poster*
* Profiles of your school’s gap year alumni (what year they graduated, what they did with their gap year and/or a quote about their experience)
* Posters from gap year programs
* General gap year information and data*
* Poster for your local USA Gap Year Fair, if applicable
* FAQs about gap years or interactive question and response from students (blank sheet or box where their questions can be answered)

* Indicates it can be downloaded from gapyearexplorationmonth.com

Share your work with us!

use #explorethegapyear on social media
or email a picture of your bulletin board to julia@enroutegapyear.com or dianna@gapyearassociation.org

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Additional Ways to Participate

POST
Talk up your support of gap years on social media using #explorethegapyear
Share your gap year experiences from an educator perspective in video form. Share it with us and we’ll spread the word!

BOAST
Contact your gap year alumni and ask them to give a presentation at your school.
Do you have alumni currently on their gap year? Ask them what they are up to and add it to your school or counseling newsletter.

HOST
Get in touch with USA Gap Year Fairs to inquire about fair locations for 2020!
Offer to host an information session or schedule a panel discussion for students and parents.
* **Gap Year Association**: Resource for data, accredited program listing and more information about gap years

* **USA Gap Year Fairs**: Fairs across the US in Jan, Feb & March

* **Go Overseas**: Program Reviews & Articles

* **Teen Life**: Program Reviews & Magazines

* **Go Abroad**: Program Reviews & Articles

* **GapYearly**: Resource for Independent Planning

* **Travel Access Project**: Scholarships & Country Resources

* **Gap Year Exploration Month**: Information and downloads
February 2019

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Questions?
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