



Every week, education expert Sanjeev Verma will answer your queries on studying abroad. E-mail queries to features@gulf-times.com

What things should we as parents consider when preparing our kids for college?

— **Kristy McKenzie**

Most parents are conscientiously looking out for ways to increase the likelihood of getting their children into reputable institutions. Though this holds true, it depends on finding the right schools and programmes at an early age, vigorously following up with schools and co-curricular activities, maintaining a balanced lifestyle and a wide variety of other factors.

From an academic viewpoint, primarily in high-school years, parents should be more aware of the activities that their children are pursuing while at school, the grades they maintain and likewise, the co-curricular activities they are participating in. This is indeed the correct moment to start thinking about your children's futures in terms of education.

Securing a place at a respectable institution is not entirely dependent on the final year of school; it is more of a mix of all efforts across a child's schooling years and other co-curricular activities that need to be started working upon at earlier stages. What parents need to be doing is to prepare their children mentally as well as academically for studying abroad when they are enrolled in high school. Introducing them to an assortment of career paths, getting them to attend summer schools and exchange programmes overseas, help them maintain an excellent academic track record, ensuring that they are provided with all the resources and support for their studies, get them the professional help they need for preparing for entrance exams as well as ensuring that they are guided by an admissions counsellor.

Parents must not make the mistake of deciding what their children should study, but generally be there to provide guidance and help by being a role model.

(Sanjeev Verma began with Ernst & Young and progressed to set up the Gulf operations of IDP Education Pty. He now leads Intelligent Partners, developing a wide range of solutions in areas of international education.)