

GAP YEAR EXPLORATION MONTH

OCTOBER 2023

Counselor Engagement Toolkit

As a professional who works with emerging adults, you are in a unique position to guide your students towards transformative gap year experiences and provide critical information to families and your colleagues.

Seize that opportunity by participating in **Gap Year Exploration Month**! Your involvement will empower young adults to embrace personal growth, broaden their horizons, and craft unique paths toward success.

This toolkit provides suggestions and links to join in! **Download and share** any of the digital assets below:



Gap Year Exploration Month graphics.

Use these open-source images and logos on your social media, in newsletters, on announcements and more!



Gap Year Exploration Month Messaging and Blurbs

We've made it easy for you to share gap year information - take a look at this folder for easy-to-share messaging!

EXPLORE
THE
GAP YEAR

GAP YEAR
ASSOCIATION

Gap Year Exploration Month, celebrated annually in October, is a shared initiative by the Gap Year Association for educators, program providers, industry groups, gap year alumni & others who aim to grow awareness of the gap year option.

Let's #explorethegapyear together!

HOW YOU CAN PARTICIPATE

1

Use #explorethegapyear and elevate GYEM in your sphere of influence this October

Join us by using the Gap Year Exploration Month hashtag on social media. We also encourage you to plan info sessions and/or virtual and in-person events in October to reach more people.

2

Nominate your alums to make videos

Have an engaged alum with a story to share? Nominate them to make a video for our student video project on social media. Email an introduction or their contact information to outreach@gapyearassociation.org.

3

Nominate Amplifiers - People Passionate about the Gap Year Option

Your network can be especially powerful in reaching new people with gap year information. We are looking for "gap year adjacent" individuals who are passionate about gap years to take collective action in October. Think about the parents, IECs, school counselors, etc that you collaborate with or who love your work. Nominate an Amplifier by [submitting this form](#).

4

Become an Amplifier Yourself!

View our menu of actions and register to participate this October. We provide all the resources you need to make it easy and successful. [Register to be an Amplifier here](#).

5

Amplifier Call to Action: Host a Gap Year Presentation: [Fill out this form](#) to register your interest in giving a gap year talk in a local school or public setting. We will provide an annotated powerpoint and all the resources you need to give a great presentation!

EXPLORE
THE
GAP YEAR

SOCIAL MEDIA

Hashtag: **#explorethegapyear**

[GYA Facebook](#)

[GYA Instagram](#)

[GYA LinkedIn](#)

[GYA TikTok](#)

Here's some suggested messaging to get you started!

- This Gap Year Exploration Month, we are asking people to help others **#explorethegapyear** by sharing their favorite gap year memories. What are yours?
#explorethegapyear
- Happy Gap Year Exploration Month! We are proud to showcase our amazing gap year alums, starting with [insert Where Are They Now profile from one of your gap year alums]
#explorethegapyear
- Life experience gained during a gap year sets students up for success in the real world. Here are five skills our alums say they developed on their gap year: [insert skills] **#explorethegapyear**

KEY MESSAGING

What is a gap year?

A gap year is an intentional break in one's formal education or career that fosters personal, practical and professional growth through experiential learning opportunities.

How do gap years set students up for success in life and work?

Today's emerging adults are facing unprecedented challenges including rising higher education costs, high rates of anxiety and depression and the fallout of a global pandemic. Taking a gap year allows a student to engage in activities that promote their well-being, build their skill set and prepare for the next steps of their education.

Why consider a gap year?

- 98% of gap year participants say their gap year increased their maturity.
- 97% say their gap year improved their self-confidence.
- 82% say their gap year gave them a competitive edge when applying to college and/or jobs.
- Gap year students are found to have higher G.P.A.s than their traditional peers and tend to graduate sooner than traditional college students.
- Students who have taken a gap year later report to being satisfied with their career.