

WHY YOUR TEEN SHOULD JOIN MARCHING BAND

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If you- or your teenager- are hesitating about joining their high school marching band, don't! Sure, the uniforms can be itchy and terrible and the practices can be strenuous, but most teens who join marching band don't regret the decision. It's that time of year when high school band "geeks" around the country take center stage and show their classmates what they're made of- will your son or daughter be one of them? As it turns out, marching band will benefit your child in a variety of ways both on and off the field. From meeting lifelong friends to improved language skills, find out why your teen should join marching band.

THEY'LL MEET LIFELONG FRIENDS

The friends your child will make during their time in marching band will significantly impact their life. Not only will your child be exposed to a group of like-minded individuals, but they'll be forced to spend a lot of time with them at practices and performances. After four years of late-night practices and emotional games, a special bond forms among the members of a marching band. Some of these friendships may even last well into college and beyond. If your child is a freshman, here's an added benefit: they'll start their first day of high school with a group of friends who have been in their shoes and will help them adjust to the fast-paced, always on-the-go marching band lifestyle.

IT'S GREAT EXERCISE

Marching band is great exercise for the exercise-averse. If your child isn't particularly sporty and you're concerned they aren't getting enough exercise, encourage them to join their high school marching band! Not only will they be walking back and forth across the field during practices and performances but, depending on the instrument they choose, they may have to juggle a heavy instrument as well. Marching in 100+ degree weather is difficult, and requires a great deal of physical stamina. Plus, the fact that your child is concentrating on music may even distract them from the fact that they're getting a good workout multiple times a week.

MUSIC CAN MAKE YOUR CHILD SMARTER

Did you know that the musical aspect of marching band is a benefit in itself? As it turns out, human brains are wired for music. Multiple studies have demonstrated that children who learn music are more adept at language and mathematics. Plus, those who are proficient in music demonstrate higher verbal IQ scores and, in many cases, find it easier to learn a second language. Music is also a great stress alleviator. Some who play or listen to music as a form of therapy find that it helps reduce anxiety and depression. Other health benefits of learning how to play an instrument range from slowing the brain's aging process to improving sleep to giving the immune system a much-needed boost.

THEY'LL LEARN A LESSON IN RESPONSIBILITY

When it comes to marching band, each and every member is held accountable for certain things. For example, a trumpet player is responsible for ensuring their instrument is tuned and polished, while the color guard member is responsible for perfecting their flag work. In being held accountable for their own responsibilities, your child will become more independent, self-reliant, and responsible member of society. In addition to responsibility, your child will learn a lesson in teamwork. One of the best things about marching band is the idea that each individual member is as important as the next- and without even one member the marching band won't be as strong. If your child has an ego now, that'll change by the end of the season.

MARCHING BAND CAN HELP WITH TIME MANAGEMENT

At the end of the day, marching band is a crash course in time management. If your child joins marching band, they'll have to balance school, homework, and practice. Add their social life and time with family to the mix and finding time for it all can be challenging. While managing so many things may be tough for a freshman, it's a skill they'll learn to appreciate as they get older. Because, after all, if they managed it all in high school why wouldn't they be able to handle a packed schedule in college and beyond? In the end, your child will learn how to manage their time- a skill many adults continue to struggle with later in life.
