

iCarly Preps for College

When Miranda Cosgrove's band went on its *Dancing Crazy* tour this summer, she fancied it a bit like college. "We're all on a bus, we watch movies, and it's kind of like having a sleepover every night," says Cosgrove, 18, star of the long-running Nickelodeon hit *iCarly*. "My backup singer's mom sends cupcakes, and she and I are always telling the guys to pick up their clothes. It's like being in a dorm."

OK, maybe if you add piles of homework and take away some movies, there's a hint of dorm life in bus touring. But next fall, Cosgrove will find out for sure. She was accepted to New York University and the University of Southern California and plans to defer her admission until 2012, after she's finished shooting *iCarly*. She's still deciding between the two schools. Her father, who owns a dry-cleaning business, went to USC and proudly showed Cosgrove around when she took her SATs there. But NYU offers the allure of an unfamiliar coast.

By Melanie D.G. Kaplan, WebMD Contributing Writer

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Actor and musician
Miranda Cosgrove
gets ready to graduate
to living on her own

"I feel like college is all about getting away and figuring out what you want to do and meeting new people," she says. "I've lived in Los Angeles my whole life, and it would be good to get away. But I'd probably be in shock at first." Cosgrove's mother has joked about getting an apartment in Manhattan not too far from her only child. "She's like, 'I can do your laundry,' and I'm like, 'Mommmyyyy.'"

Known internationally for her role as Carly Shay and for her run on Nickelodeon's *Drake & Josh*, Cosgrove is one of the highest-paid teens on TV. She also lent her voice to *Despicable Me*, appeared in an episode of CBS's *The Good Wife*, and released her first album with Columbia Records, *Sparks Fly*, which debuted at No. 8 on the Billboard 200, all last year. Yet Cosgrove—who laughs easily and makes even a stranger on the phone feel like she's Cosgrove's BFF—still thinks of herself as an average 18-year-old. That's especially true now, as she transitions from her teens to adulthood.

"I feel like it's one of those moments where everyone is figuring out what they want to do," she says. "It's kind of a nice time. You have a lot of open doors and a lot of possibilities. All my friends are going through the same things, so I don't feel alone in that." Even Cosgrove's precollege fears are typical—she worries about keeping up academically (having been tutored on and off the set since sixth grade) and fitting in socially.

Cosgrove plans to study theater or film and would like to continue acting after college, yet she welcomes the break from a career that she fell into as a child. "I couldn't see myself doing anything besides acting," she says. "But I want to take a step back to make sure it's the right path for me."

Finding the right path means experimenting in other areas of her life as well. Take fashion. It's not easy to admit in Hollywood—a place where everyone seems to have her own look and fave designer—that you don't have a signature style. But Cosgrove confesses she's still figuring it all out.

"I've gone through phases where I've tried things that didn't really work, but my mom helps me with that," she says. "We shop together a lot, and she's really good



((College is all about getting away and figuring out what you want to do and meeting new people.))

with fashion." While Cosgrove is more of a jeans and sweatshirt girl on workdays, she does love dolling up in heels and a leather jacket when she's headed out with friends.

Downtime often means chilling with her best friend and next-door neighbor, Nina, watching DVDs, making up parody songs on the guitar, or going to a kickboxing class.

But to rejuvenate her soul, Cosgrove leaves movies and music behind and heads to Memphis, Tenn., where she visits patients at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital (www.stjude.org). She made her first trip to the hospital about six years

ago. She met a girl her age who was going through chemotherapy and was moved by their connection.

She's returned twice since then to spend some time with the kids, most recently with the cast of *iCarly*. During the visit, the girl she had befriended ran up and hugged her. "I didn't know her whole story the first time, but she gave a speech to the cast and told us what it was like at the hospital. I remember thinking I could totally be friends with her. I'm never going to forget her." (At press time, Cosgrove says she hopes to go back soon and plans on visiting children's hospitals in various parts of the country during her summer tour.)

There was another unforgettable encounter in Washington, D.C., last Christmas, when she performed with other artists at the White House. "I was really nervous," Cosgrove says. "And then I got to meet President Obama before I went on, which made me more nervous."

The president cleverly referenced her role as a preppy band manager in *School of Rock*. "It was really funny. He was joking around, and I just thought, this is crazy that he knew about the movie," she says, sounding delightfully awestruck. "And crazy that he knew about me!" ■

STEPHAN PIKROBA/ PRESS/ COON INTERNATIONAL

Take 5

Got five minutes?
Here are five healthy ways to recharge

By Jennifer Soong
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Five minutes. True, it's not a heck of a lot of time, especially with that stack of books staring at you. But it's just long enough for you to do one thing—and maybe that one thing that will turn your day around. Take five and try these five simple ways to lower stress and boost your mood and energy levels. You might just find the extra spark you need to tackle all that homework. Well—most of it.

1 MAKE YOUR BED. Starting off each day with this small ritual can help create a calm environment for you in your bedroom. Gretchen Rubin, author of *The Happiness Project*, writes that many people benefit from making this modest step part of their routines. By checking it off your to-do list early on, you've got one less thing to worry about for the rest of the day.

2 CLEAR YOUR DESK. You may not be able to overhaul your dorm closet in five minutes, but you can manage to tidy your desk. From stray papers to scattered coffee mugs, clutter can make you lose focus and can curb productivity. Declutter your outer environment, and you may feel lighter on the inside and more motivated to concentrate on the task at hand.

3 PUMP UP THE MUSIC. Several studies find that listening to music can help lower blood pressure, reduce stress, and boost mood. The right music has the power to change your attitude. So load up your MP3 player and create a special playlist that will make you smile—whether you're working or working out.

4 SNIFF A LEMON. For a quick de-stressing trick, turn to an underrated sense—your sense of smell. Japanese researchers found that linalool, a substance found in lemons, has anti-inflammatory properties and may reduce the fight-or-flight stress response. Research shows other scents, such as basil, juniper, and lavender, help lower stress.



5 UNPLUG. Just because we live in a wired world doesn't mean you need to stay connected every minute of every single day. Staring at computer screens and electronics all day long can zap your energy and encourage inactivity. Log off your email and Internet (yes, that means Facebook, too). This is especially important to allow you to unwind and relax before bed. ■

