

Will my child be comfortable in the social environment at Duke?

We received several different answers, which we've included below, because we thought the different perspectives were very valuable.

- ❖ Duke offers a variety of ways that students can get connected socially. From the East Campus freshman living arrangements and Focus Program – where students in the same program live in one dorm – to arts groups, faith-based groups, cultural organizations, and other clubs and activities, there are multiple ways for students to find their niche and feel comfortable.
- ❖ The student body at Duke is diverse enough that a student can find his or her niche, but it may take a semester or two. With students from every state and an increasing international student population, Duke offers kids a chance to explore other cultures. College is a chance for students to reinvent themselves as they explore new paradigms in and out of class. The new financial aid initiative will guarantee that the Duke community includes kids from all social backgrounds and income levels; the Campus Culture Initiative indicates that Duke is not complacent about its learning environment; and the emphasis on the arts at Duke brings fresh ideas and performances to campus. A student at Duke has the luxury of asking: “What do I want from my four years at Duke?” It is an active process of exploring or creating options instead of waiting for a professor to provide the answer.
- ❖ Our experience with both sons was that within hours of moving in, they had met at least a handful of instant friends. They spent much of that first year together, exploring everything from orientation to quad parties to classes. Now, three and five years later, they still maintain many of the friendships that started on move-in day. Duke is a unique school where freshmen live together on the same campus and have the opportunity to build relationships with different students who are also new to college, rather than being thrown in the mix with upperclassmen. Students have the opportunity to join an incredible number of different social and community-based groups, whether Greek or residential living communities, service and academic-based organizations, or cultural groups.
- ❖ Our son is a first-year student, and we have found that the East Campus experience has been very positive for him. Living on East has allowed him to become acclimated to his surroundings and acquainted with his classmates very quickly, without feeling overwhelmed. From the outset on “move-in day,” we were greeted by energetic and friendly upperclassmen who cheerfully lugged his belongings up three flights to his room. Also, the orientation program provided us with pertinent information and a relative level of comfort to begin the first year. The staff at Duke assists students in the development of programs and activities suited to their interests.