A New Chapter

How Parents Fit into Their Students’ Lives at College
Making the Transition

• It’s an adjustment for everyone!
• Mix of emotions
• Frequency of communication will change
• Important to trust your student
Contending with Change

Change can lead to:

- A chance to know your student on a different level
- A catalyst for good, sometimes necessary conversation
- A prod for you both to try new things and stretch beyond your comfort zones
- A way to determine other means of communication
- A chance to learn things about one another
- An opportunity to miss – and often gain a renewed sense of appreciation for – one another
- The start or continuation of your adult relationship with your child
An Evolving Relationship

Students will need some different things now, including:

• They need you to let go
• They need to be able to make mistakes
• They need to know that you believe in them
Being Interested, Not Intrusive

A fine line to walk when staying connected to your student…

• Don’t make your talks feel like quizzes
• Ask what he’s learning rather than solely focusing on grades
• Ask about friends that she mentions
• Share what’s happening with you, too
• Maintain a healthy distance -- don’t need to call or email daily
• Ask what he’s getting involved in -- let him share his enthusiasm!
Student Development, in a Nutshell

- We provide opportunities for students to achieve competence in academic and non-academic arenas
- We challenge them while also providing support
- We teach them how to manage emotions
- We help them become autonomous so they can move from dependence to interdependence
- We encourage them to determine who they really are, on many levels
Student Development, in a Nutshell (continued)

- We support the development of positive relationships, including those with family, friends, partners and diverse individuals
- We help students identify and pursue their purpose
- We offer assistance as they develop their values and figure out what they stand for
Student Advocates

Many folks are involved in developing students in positive ways:

- Residence life
- Orientation guides
- Faculty
- Support staff
- Career services
- Health services
- Campus ministry
- Coaches
- Counselors
- Advisors
- Work supervisors
- Peer educators
- And many more!
Student Advocates...

- Make ourselves available to students
- Welcome them coming to us with problems
- Treat students as adults and get them involved in solving their own problems
- Intervene if aware of a potentially life-threatening behavior
- Respect students’ privacy yet can’t always promise confidentiality
Student Advocates… (continued)

• Concerned with students’ safety
• Don’t serve as “babysitters”
• Don’t EVER want to see a student get hurt
• Expect students to take responsibility
• Are here to support students every step of the way!
Expectations for Self-Responsibility

We expect students to take responsibility for:

- Their behavioral choices
- Respecting rules & policies
- Academic honesty & persistence
- Personal integrity & care
- Developing healthy habits
- Seeking assistance when needed
- Being a positive community member
FERPA Facts
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

- Federal law to protect privacy of students’ educational records
- When student enters college or turns 18, FERPA rights transfer from parent to student
- Student record info not typically shared unless written permission given or it’s a special case, like health/safety emergency
- More info is available about FERPA and our school -- just ask!
Involvement!

- Involved students more likely to stay in school
- Involved students feel sense of belonging
- Involved students able to do well academically, too
- Involved students more satisfied with their campus experience
Wellness Support

• Encourage student to talk with someone when dealing with emotional issues
• Tout the benefits of good sleep
• Send -- and promote -- healthy snacks
• Encourage community service
• Suggest simple ways to get moving
Academic Support

• Ask what she’s learning
• Don’t always focus on grades
• Encourage him to seek help from a tutor, advisor, faculty, academic support services if struggling
• Ask her to discuss class projects & papers with you
• Encourage her involvement in academic life, like extra credit, class participation, etc.
• Help her determine how to balance classes with work, social life, extracurriculars & more
Who Students Can Turn To

- Counseling center
- Academic support
- Res life staff
- Health services
- Faculty and staff
- Student affairs staff
- Learning disabilities coordinator… and others!

They’re all here because they WANT to help students!
Making Smart Choices: Alcohol & Other Drugs

- Talk openly about AOD
- Empower your student to say “no”
- Learn all you can
- Don’t glorify “youthful drinking days”
- Help your student learn from mistakes
- Leave lines of communication open
Making Smart Choices: Money Matters

- Work together to set up a budget plan
- Warn him not to apply for all the credit cards offered
- Have her chip in to pay expenses
- Set spending limits
- Talk about ATM and debit card overuse
- Encourage him to look for scholarships and other financial aid opportunities
Making Smart Choices: Personal Safety

- Don’t walk alone in isolated areas
- Don’t get in car with someone under the influence
- Don’t accept drinks from strangers
- Keep living space locked
- Don’t give out personal info to people met online
- Report threatening texts, calls, etc.
- Never become so intoxicated that your judgment and ability to stay safe are compromised
- Don’t be alone with unknown people
A Bigger World

• Doing service
• Contributing to community
• Being open to diversity
• Trying new things
• Having thought-provoking talks
• Being open to unknown possibilities
They Still Need You!

• Students need to experience freedom, independence and self-sufficiency
• Doesn’t mean you’re not needed, though!
• Evolving relationship requires compromise, flexibility and trust
• This can be a great time for all of you!