

a new chapter

How parents fit into their
students' lives at college

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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!
- Tutors
- Advisors
- Coaches
- Peer educators
- Campus ministry

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 w/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!