



Getting You and Your Child Ready for College

Fall is a time of year when thousands of families are preparing to send their child off to college. This can be an exciting, but also stressful time for parents as well as for the young adults getting ready to make this transition. There are many adjustments that everyone in the family will face as this major life event takes place. Often parents have questions about how to help their child make this adjustment from a teen to a young, independent adult. Some of the suggestions outlined below can be implemented before your child makes the actual physical move and some after he/she has moved to their new school. Two of the most prevalent concerns that parents have center around how to handle money and how to manage communication. Regular communications with your child is important, but remember that he or she is an adult and needs some space! The points addressed below are suggestions to help parents and their college-bound children make this adjustment as smoothly as possible.

Tips for Parents with New College Students:

Keeping in Touch

1. Schedule a regular phone time, i.e. every Sunday night at 7 p.m.
2. Plan to visit your child at least once a semester; more, if they are within driving distance
3. Ask your child detailed questions about school and classes—ask questions that you feel only someone who attends classes could answer
4. Set up an e-mail routine since most college students prefer to communicate through the Internet. There is always time to use the computer and you are almost guaranteed to reach them through e-mail
5. Send your child care packages--college students get homesick a lot and sometimes they miss those things only their hometown can offer.
6. Learn how to text message. Texting is another way to say hello, ask about an exam, etc.

Money

1. Give gift cards to places like Publix and Wal-Mart instead of cash
2. Place your child on a strict budget early—they can always spend more, but it is difficult to adjust to spending less
3. Monitor your child's spending closely—use online banking to track their expenses
4. Make your child responsible for keeping a record of purchases
5. Deposit a fixed amount of money that you know your child will need every month for necessities only
6. Do not give your child a credit card in his/her name only.
7. A joint credit card with a low spending limit is another option which allows for your oversight
8. Encourage your child to take on a part time job for spending money if academic performance allows

Learning the Town

1. Give your child a local city map to keep handy
2. Find local grocery and drug stores close to campus and/or housing
3. Obtain bus schedules for on and off campus transportation
4. Locate local auto repair shops, utilities, cable & phone businesses and local laundromats
5. Locate medical facilities and physicians, other than campus clinics
6. Explore fun/ leisure opportunities, such as movie theaters, video rentals, local lakes, bike trails, etc.

Social Support

1. Assist in finding local civic organizations and/or spiritual connections whether on campus or in town
2. Look for volunteer opportunities on campus or in the community
3. Be aware of mental health counseling options, if needed
4. Locate recreational opportunities
5. Locate campus gyms; check out options for classes such as yoga, spinning, etc.
6. Find out about intramural sports, to either join or to support

*Lee's Place Grief and Loss Counseling Center
216 Lake Ella Drive
Tallahassee, 32303
850-841-7733*