Parent and Student Concerns About College Life

How will my son or daughter be able to organize time to get to classes?
- Your child is provided with a class schedule and a planner to assist in organizing time.
- If time management becomes a problem, the Student Learning Center can assist.

How much money should I give him or her?
- This is something you and your student will need to discuss before s/he comes to school.
- Have a frank discussion about setting a budget and managing a checking account.
- If you give him/her a credit card, remember that if it is in your name, you are ultimately responsible.

Should my student bring a car on campus?
- Students are encouraged to leave cars at home.
- Chico is a very walkable and bikeable community and parking is difficult to find.
- There is a city bus system.

What if my son or daughter becomes ill?
- Your child should bring all necessary medical information to college.
- A health center is located on campus with several excellent physicians.
- There is also a hospital in town.

How often should I call?
- Talk with your student and decide together how much contact is needed.
- Phone calls from your student may be less abundant at first.

What if my student calls in distress?
- Listen, be supportive, assist in problem solving, but try not to rush to the rescue.
- Encourage him/her to visit Psychological Counseling and speak with a counselor.
- If immediate danger arises contact the University Police Department.

How will I know that my student will be safe?
- All incoming freshman go through safety training before classes start.
- The university has a well staffed police department with sworn California peace officers.

What if my son or daughter starts drinking alcohol or using drugs?
- College can be a time of increased independence and experimentation.
- Now is the time to have a frank discussion with your child about the dangers of binge drinking and how to set safe limits.
- Educate your child about the dangers of abusing prescription drugs as well as other street drugs.
- If you are concerned about a problem, Psychological Counseling or Campus Alcohol or Drug Education Center (CADEC) can help.

What if my student gets homesick?
- Keep communication flowing—be aware of the emotions as they are occurring.
- By going home all of the time, students will not become emotionally independent.
- Encourage him/her to get involved in campus activities.

What can I expect the first visit home to be like?
- Your student will likely want to spend more time catching up with old friends than catching up with you. (Try not to take this personally.)
- Negotiate house rules ahead of time. Remember, students have been setting their own rules for the past few months, and it may be time to remind them of your rules.

Should I turn my son or daughter’s room at home into a computer room or home gym?
- Your child has gone to college, not left for good.
- Talk with your student before making any room changes.

Where Can Parents Get Support?
Friends and Family
Other Parents with College Students
Alumni and Parent Relations: www.csuchico.edu/alumni/parents

Provided by Psychological Counseling and Wellness Ô Student Services Center 430
(530) 898-6345 Ô www.csuchico.edu/cnts
Problems College Students May Encounter

- **Relationship Concerns**
  - Average college romance last 3 months
  - Break-ups result in lots of heartache, but typically heal with time

- **Depression**
  - Usually short term
  - Often a result of relationship concerns
  - Sometimes due to seasonal changes
  - Sometimes due to exhaustion
  - Sometimes more serious issues are the cause

- **Family Disputes**
  - Hearing of problems that are occurring at home
  - Unable to be "caretaker" or "protector" of family members—can lead to feeling guilty

- **Roommate Difficulties**
  - Boundary issues
  - Common courtesy problems
  - Agreeing on room rules (e.g., study time, friends over, etc.)

- **Trauma**
  - Accidents
  - Illnesses with friends or family

- **Eating Problems**
  - Fears about parents managing without them
    - Unable to keep the active role with the family
    - Need to discuss these issues with family—learn what he/she can do while away from home (e-mail, instant message, phone calls, etc.)
  - Eating Problems
    - May gain weight due to decrease in physical activity and increase in food choices in the dining hall—can create mind set of “feeling fat”
    - Precursors for an eating disorder may begin

- **Identity Formation**
  - With new exposures to people and places one tries to fit in
  - The identity that was held in high school is changed

- **Divorced Parents**
  - Finances—tuition and living expenses
  - How to maintain relationships with both parents—may feel caught in the middle

- **Loneliness/Isolation**
  - May be the worst midway through fall semester
  - Contact with family/friends decreases
  - Lack of involvement

Concerns Students Often Express:

- **They are worried that they will disappoint their parents**
  - May not get the best of grades
  - An additional semester will cost family more money
  - May not major in area that the family approves of

- **Concern that the family will go on without them**
  - Lack the immediate information of what is occurring within the family

- **They are worried that their parents will make choices without them**
  - Not there to put in their opinions

- **After a breakup, they are sure they will never be happy again**
  - A lot of heartache is felt after a relationship has ended
  - Unsure if they want to risk that negative experience again
  - If it was a long-term relationship, there may be uncertainty about how to begin dating again

- **They are worried they won’t make friends**
  - All of their high school friends went to other schools
  - They are miles away from home
  - Not sure they will fit in with their peers—will they be cool enough
  - Unsure how to make friends or join in activities

Where Can Students Get Support?

- Friends and Family
- Psychological Counseling and Wellness
- Faculty, Staff, RAs
- Campus organizations/activities: www.csuchico.edu/sac/

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