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    Student Services Center 430
(530) 898-6345    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

- **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/

Provided by Psychological Counseling and Wellness  O Student Services Center 430
(530) 898-6345  O www.csuchico.edu/cnts