

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

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
- ❖ **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
- ❖ **Concern that the family will go on without them**
 - Lack the immediate information of what is occurring within the family
- ❖ **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
- ❖ **They are worried that their parents will make choices without them**
 - Not there to put in their opinions

Where Can Students Get Support?

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