

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

❖ 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/