



a newsletter for parents & families



May 2015

Seasonal Student Issues

There's a seasonal ebb and flow when it comes to student issues. Here are a few things your student may be experiencing this month:

- Anxiety and tension due to realization that the year is ending and final exams are about to occur
- Senior panic about jobs, finances, etc.
- First-year students are feeling somewhat confident because they have almost made it
- Good feelings are evident as summer is near
- Lots of cramming, studying and wrapping things up academically
- End of the year socialization
- Packing and checking out
- Saying goodbye to important people and putting closure on the year

A Warm Welcome Home

If your student is coming home for the summer, you likely want to welcome him or her with open arms. Here are some simple ways to do just that...

Provide a Space. Even if your student doesn't have a room at home, make a space that he can call his own during the summer. That way he won't feel so much like a visitor.

Have a Get-Together. During the first week or two of her homecoming, consider getting family and friends together to welcome her. It can be a backyard barbecue, a simple dessert potluck, a picnic in the park or bowling on a rainy day. Gathering important people in one place will help her feel welcomed back home.

Don't Go Overboard with Mandates. Students who are bombarded with mandated rules and responsibilities all at once might feel



Simple Welcomes

Consider putting a few welcome home tidbits in your student's space to welcome him or her...

- A library book you know he's been wanting to read
- Some favorite snacks
- Fresh flowers from the garden
- An iTunes gift card
- A frame she can fill with a favorite photo from the past year

like they want to run the other way. Instead, make it a mutual conversation where your student can talk about ways he can pitch in this summer while you also talk about your expectations. The end results are fairly similar – it's just the method that can make *all* the difference.

Be Encouraging. Your student may be taking summer classes, doing an internship or working hard this summer. Whatever the case may be, provide encouragement and support along the way to help keep her going.



An End-of-the-Year Assessment

The end of the academic year is a good time for reflection and your student may be ripe for such self-awareness. Once she's done with classes and exams, you can help her take a look at where she is now that the term is over and where she'd like to be when it comes to becoming her genuine self.

For instance, how does she feel about herself when it comes to things such as...

- Serving others
- Being a learner
- Knowing what she values
- Embracing diversity
- Treatment of others
- Work ethic
- Being a leader
- Being a friend
- Being a sibling
- Being a son/daughter
- Being in a relationship
- Developing into someone interested in _____
(a hobby, interest, passion)
- Being an informed, engaged citizen

Add other topics that are important to your student, too. Examining these traits now allows your student to set some summer goals for the areas she'd like to focus on. Perhaps she's interested in serving others on a more regular basis by steadily volunteering for the same agency. Or

Summer Goals

Ask your student: "What two areas would you like to intentionally work on throughout the summer? How will you go about doing this? And how can I support you along the way?"

maybe she wants to work on becoming a more informed citizen by reading the newspaper on a daily basis.

Whatever the case may be, taking an honest look at herself now so she can set goals can help your student work toward becoming her most genuine self this summer.

Bike Safety Basics

Now that the weather is much nicer, more and more people are taking up biking as recreation, and to cut back on transportation costs and environmental impacts. Here are some bike safety tips to share with your student...

- Ride on the right, with traffic, instead of against it
- Wear a bike helmet that fits properly
- Obey all traffic signs, signals and lane markings
- Stay alert by using your eyes and ears – don't wear a headset because you could easily get into a dangerous situation
- Watch for people in parked cars who might pull out or open a door unexpectedly
- Look and signal before turning
- Be predictable – don't weave and do signal your moves
- Yield to traffic when appropriate and to pedestrians who have already entered a crosswalk
- Watch for road hazards like broken glass, potholes, gravel and more – and point them out to people riding behind you
- Try to avoid riding at night whenever possible, since it's much



harder to see folks then – have reflectors on the front and back of your bike, as well as on the tires, and wear clothing that makes you more easily seen

- Check that your brakes work and that your tires are properly inflated
- Adjust your bike seat to fit – stand over it and have 1-2 inches between you and the top bar if it's a road bike and 3-4 inches if it's a mountain bike, make the seat level front to back, adjust the seat height to allow a slight bend in the knee when the leg is fully extended and have the handlebars at the same level as the seat

For more information about Bike Safety and Fitting a Bicycle Helmet, go to www.nhtsa.gov and type "bike safety" in the top search bar.



Making Connections Through Networking

A Key Component of Today's Job Searches

Networking is a skill that students need to develop as they explore potential careers and lay the foundation for their job search. It's about making connections. And in today's technological times, there are a variety of avenues that your student can take in networking with potential employers.

Social Networking

According to some career experts, online social networking is one of the best things that has happened to recruiting. Yet, it's important that students take care when networking through this medium by keeping a few tips in mind:

- Pick one site that will be used specifically for professional networking
- Post only professional content; avoid posting personal updates or pictures
- Post a current resume on your site

- Keep your profile clean, simple and updated
- Communicate professional endeavors you are currently working on and the results of each
- Encourage "network friends" who know your previous work to provide online references

An increasing number of employers will check students' Facebook and LinkedIn pages when considering whom to hire. Questionable photos and content could sabotage your students' chances by creating negative

impressions. Consider talking about this now so that your student doesn't find himself in a compromising position during the job search.

Five Quick Networks to Tap Into Today!

1. Alumni
2. Relatives
3. Faculty/Staff
4. Professional Organizations
5. Former Employers

NETWORK Tips for Students

Nurture relationships – once you make a connection, keep it going

Establish connections – find a mentor, attend events & become known

Talk with alums – they're often eager to help students succeed!

Write thank yous – you'll remain positively in people's minds as a result

Offer assistance – it's not just about what you can "get" from people

Really be real – be genuine, show your interest & be *you!*

Keep at it – perseverance will get you far

Summer Smarts

These resources can help students refresh their knowledge by summer's end while also learning some new summer smarts...

- *An Incomplete Education: 3,684 Things You Should Have Learned but Probably Didn't* by Judy Jones and William Wilson
- *Homework for Grown-ups: Everything You Learnt at School and Promptly Forgot* by E. Foley & B. Coates
- *I Used to Know That: Stuff You Forgot from School* by Caroline Taggart
- *How to Sew a Button: And Other Nifty Things Your Grandmother Knew* by Erin Bried
- *How to Build a Fire: And Other Handy Things Your Grandfather Knew* by Erin Bried
- *The Bedside Baccalaureate: A Handy Daily Cerebral Primer to Fill in the Gaps, Refresh Your Knowledge & Impress Yourself & Other Intellectuals* edited by David Rubel
- *Smarter by Sunday: 52 Weekends of Essential Knowledge for the Curious Mind* by The New York Times



Students' Ethical Development

Values, Questions & Decision Making

So much growth happens during the college years. One area in which this is really noticeable is in the area of ethical development. Students may be pondering questions such as: What do I value and why? Why did my parents teach me to...? What should I do about...? What do I want to be and how does this relate to what's important to me in life? These questions are just a few of many that college students ask themselves during their college experience.

Ethical Decision Making

As students continue to explore their personal values systems and determine what they believe and why, here are some questions they can ask themselves when making decisions:

- Will anyone be harmed as a result of my choice?
- Will my decision promote a win/win situation for all involved?
- Am I respecting myself and others with my choice?
- How will my decision make me feel about myself?
- How would I feel if my family knew about my choice?
- Is my decision in conflict with any of my values?

An Ethical Framework

Researcher Dr. Karen Kitchener offers five ethical principles as a framework for exploring values and making decisions. These principles are used worldwide as people develop ethically...

Do No Harm – Make every effort to avoid psychological and physical harm of others, both intentional and unintentional.

Benefit Others – Aim to promote the personal growth of others and

“It takes less time to do a thing right than to explain why you did it wrong.”

— Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

make a positive contribution to others' welfare.

Respect Autonomy – Remember that everyone has the right to think, choose and act, as long as their actions do not interfere with the welfare of others. They also have the right to privacy, confidentiality and informed consent.

Be Just – Demonstrate fair treatment of all individuals and fair distribution of goods, services and rewards.

Be Faithful – Keep promises and be truthful and loyal in all endeavors.

Part of the growth process that students go through in college is figuring out who they are ethically and how their values guide their lives. These five principles can provide a roadmap for making good, fair decisions along the way.

Wrapping It Up

The academic year is winding down and here are some suggestions for ways your student can wrap it up right!

Don't Burn Bridges. It's tempting to say what you *really* think as you're heading out the door, yet the one it can most hurt is you. You never know who might overhear, start rumors, think the worst of you or have a negative impact on you within a leadership position or job. Better to let it go and not burn any bridges.

Follow the Rules. Quiet hours in the residence halls are for everyone's benefit at this stressful, study-

filled time of year. Move-out processes are to help you avoid extra charges and not leave a mess for the cleaning staff. It's not hard to follow the rules in place at the end of the year since they're all, ultimately, for your own benefit.

Stay Organized. During the last days of the term, there are multiple details to keep track of, from study group times to packing to getting all the academic work turned in. Make lists, put reminders in your phone and use other organizational methods that work for you.

Leave Time for Goodbyes. Saying goodbye to friends who mean a lot to you isn't something to just *hope* will happen. Just imagine how awful it'll feel if they leave without a proper goodbye! So, plan to see these people intentionally so you can let them know what they mean to you before the summer separation.

Encourage your student to think about these important wrap-up details as he makes the most of these final days. It'll be intense, for sure, yet he'll come out on the other end feeling more satisfied and relieved.