
Transition from High School to College

— Social and emotional health of —
the student

Why Emotional Health ?

- Emotional health is a critical part of the college transition that should not be overlooked.
- Emotional issues are cited as a leading reason students struggle during college.
- Students who have skills in managing stress and taking care of their overall wellness will be better able to handle the challenges of college.
- Even with physical distance, parents have enormous influence on their children's behavior, decisions and welfare.
- Almost everyone of your children will experience or deal with an emotional issue during college. ¹

JED foundation found that 63% of college students will turn to their parents when in emotional distress. 1

However,

More than half of college students said they have experienced “overwhelming anxiety” in the last year, according to the American College Health Association, and 32 % say they have felt so depressed “**that it was difficult to function.**”

More than one-quarter of incoming freshmen at open-enrollment colleges and universities plan to transfer to another institution later.

Resilience and Grit:

What does **DISCOMFORT** look like for your student during freshmen year?

Geographical? Size of school? Academic? Religious? Social?

Is my student ready for college?

Evaluating readiness

- **Time management-** Smartphones, homework, extracurriculars
- **Stress management-** coping mechanisms intact
 - Emotional, social and intellectual “overwhelm”
- **Ability to locate and utilize resources**

On their way to...



Independence!

Choices...

Anticipatory fit.

- Can you see your student there?
- Is your student excited about this school?
About the opportunities the school offers?
- What are they talking about?
- Can your student see him/herself there?

Before they leave.

Alcohol and drugs.

- **What are your expectations?**
- **What are their expectations?**
- **Direct conversations about use is important- Where do you stand?**
- **Not every college student drinks regularly.**



According to the national survey on drug use and health, almost 60 % of college students ages 18–22 drank alcohol in the past month; almost 2 out of 3 of them engaged in binge drinking during that same timeframe.

Beyond the direct conversation about alcohol - What are they concerned about? How are they planning to “find their people”?

Policies to review with your child...

Alcohol & amnesty policies

Procedures for reporting incidents or concerns

Definitions of sexual misconduct

Academic standards & student privacy (FERPA policy)

Sanctions for policy violations & tuition refund policies

Honor codes

Annual Fire Safety & Security Report (crimes on campus)

Services to look for...

Counseling centers, wellness programs & resources

Sexual assault services

Medical services offered

Campus security

Health and wellness mission statement

Residential life mission statement

[US dept of Education - Campus Safety and Security](#)



ADJUSTING TO COLLEGE

CAN BE TRICKY

Approximately 50% of respondents said that if given the choice, they would still choose to enroll at their current college, while 34% were undecided. The items below provide us with a look into how first-year students acclimate to their new school.

FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS ARE WORRIED ABOUT SAFETY ON CAMPUS



24%

Felt unsafe on campus



25%

Believe sexual violence
is prevalent on campus



23%

Are not aware of their college's
harassment/assault reporting policy

WHILE COLLEGES TOOK STEPS TO EASE STUDENTS' TRANSITION TO COLLEGE,



30%

Participated in a common book or summer reading program



51%

Took a course or first-year seminar designed to help students adjust to college life

FYE

54%

Were satisfied with first-year programs



63%

Were satisfied with their orientation

MANY STUDENTS STILL HAD DIFFICULTY ADJUSTING.



47%

Found it difficult to manage time effectively



36%

Had difficulty developing effective study skills



47%

Frequently felt overwhelmed by all they had to do



57%

Felt isolated from campus life



71%

Felt lonely or homesick

WHILE SOME STUDENTS MAINTAINED CONTACT WITH THEIR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES BACK HOME....



36%

Interacted with parents or guardians daily



24%

Interacted with siblings or extended family daily



20%

Frequently went home for the weekend



29%

Contributed money to help support their family



34%

Felt their family responsibilities interfered with schoolwork

MOST FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS ESTABLISHED CONNECTIONS AT THEIR NEW SCHOOL.



86%

Felt that faculty empowered them to learn



85%

Agreed that at least one staff member took an interest in their development



72%

Found it easy to develop close friendships with other students



75%

Interacted with close friends at their school daily



73%

Received advice/counseling from another student



66%

Are satisfied with the overall sense of community among students

Questions for parents to consider

Change in parenting

- What decisions, challenges, choices or difficulties do you expect your child to handle (at least at first) on his/her own?
- On which decisions will your child seek your input?
- At what point and/or under what circumstances should your child ask for help?
- Under what circumstances would your child want a friend or roommate to call you or the counseling center?

Questions for students to consider...

1. What are your short and long-term goals both academically and personally next year and when you get to college?
2. How do you think your relationships with your family will change when you go to college?
3. Do you expect your college grades to be similar to those you got in high school? If so, how will you feel if they are not?
4. How will you deal with these feelings and improve?

(Questions to Consider-con't)

5. Do you think you will need any outside help to do well in your courses? If not, why (most students do)? If yes, how will you find it?

6. Will it be difficult to discipline yourself to keep academic commitments, such as attending classes and being prepared for classes? If not, why do you think so? If so, what skills will you need to manage it?

7. Do you think you will feel stressed at college? If so, list five ways to deal with it. If not, why not ?

Questions for you *and* your child:



Communication:

How often (daily, weekly, monthly, on an as-needed basis) do you expect to hear from your child? How frequently does your child want to hear from you?

General concerns or fears:

Parent and student should list top 3 fears/ concerns about your senior year or heading off to college.

College websites

Sewanee: University of the South



Auburn Counseling services



UNC-Chapel Hill Health services



UT- Knoxville



University of Georgia



University of Alabama



References and resources

1. **PDF- parent edition- "Transition year"**
http://www.transitionyear.org/downloads/parent_pdf_guide.pdf
2. **Freshmen and mental health**
<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/02/05/incoming-students-emotional-health-all-time-low-survey-says>
3. **Student advice:**
<http://careforyourmind.org/so-now-what-mental-health-and-making-the-transition-from-high-school-to-college/>
4. **Student advice - private school to large college:**
<http://www.collegexpress.com/interests/public-colleges-and-universities/blog/private-school-public-college/>
5. **Starting the Conversation: College and your mental health-**
<https://www.jedfoundation.org/national-alliance-on-mental-illness-and-the-jed-foundation-release-starting-the-conversation-college-and-your-mental-health/>
6. **5 tips from Harvard student:**
<https://college.harvard.edu/admissions/hear-our-students/student-blog/five-tips-how-transition-high-school-college>
7. **From Huff post:** http://www.huffingtonpost.com/brian-harke/high-school-to-college-tr_b_620043.html
8. **Resilience and grit:** <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/film-festival-learning-from-failure-resilience>
9. **Online resource for college mental health:** <http://www.ulifeline.org/>