



a newsletter for parents & families

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May 2014

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 realizations 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 feel that they have made it through the first year (almost!)
- Good feelings are evident as summer is near
- Lots of cramming, studying and wrapping things up academically
- End of the year socialization, sometimes involving high-risk drinking
- Packing and checking out
- Saying goodbye to important people and putting closure on the year

A Season for Goodbyes

It's time for students to say goodbye – to beloved friends who may be graduating or transferring, to a residence hall community they really clicked with or to a leadership position that helped them grow. Or maybe your student is graduating and saying goodbye to his college years.

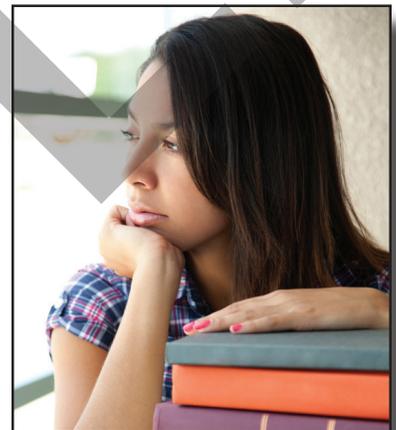
These goodbyes can be emotional for many students, and they can show it in multiple ways:

- Crying or getting choked up more regularly
- Trying to cram in as much social time with people as possible
- Avoiding those they'll be missing
- Engaging in high-risk drinking to numb the pain
- Keeping themselves busy so they don't have to face the emotions

Helping Your Student

Everyone has their own way of dealing with the emotion of goodbyes. You can help your student deal with this difficult time by:

- Encouraging her to make time with friends before it's too late – so she doesn't have any regrets
- Listening when he wants to talk about what he's feeling



- Helping her look forward to what the summer and next year will bring
- Staying tuned in to his emotions – and offering to talk whenever he likes
- Speaking up if you hear her dealing with emotions in unhealthy ways

Also be prepared if you're picking your student up after the school year has ended. He'll likely want to spend time saying goodbye to folks when you may be ready to drive home. Compromise and communicate in this situation. Unfinished business in the arena of goodbyes can be damaging and grounds for regret. It's important for students to feel like they've wrapped up their important relationships in the best ways possible.

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Transitioning from the First to Second Year

Pretty soon, your new student will be a sophomore. Congratulations!

The second year of college can be filled with many questions and few immediate answers. As the summer progresses, you may observe your now sophomore student considering what the coming year will bring. You can help by discussing issues with her such as...

- Fear that her initial success was just “lucky” and can’t be repeated
- Uncertainty about her future profession
- Experimenting with relationships that include different types of people
- Desire to experience new communities
- Decrease in friendships back home
- Use of finances for immediate gratification

- Lack of a long-term financial picture
- The search for purpose and meaning
- More personal emphasis on weaknesses, rather than strengths
- The “real world” still seeming far away

Common Second Year Reflections

- Who am I?
- Who are these people I am hanging out with?
- What do my academic studies mean to me?
- What am I going to do with the rest of my life?
- How are my beliefs different than my parents’?

Summer Brain Work

Summer “brain work” is valuable in helping students keep their minds limber and active so they are ready for the academic rigor of the fall. For some, this may involve summer coursework, while others may follow a more informal learning track that includes reading, intentionally learning new things through one-shot classes or making sure to have some new experiences.

Whatever the case may be, intentionally keeping their brain in shape takes some planning. Here are a few questions to help your student get in that mindset...

- ▶ **What is a new experience you’d like to have this summer?** (e.g. traveling to a historical site, doing some family genealogy, trying a kayaking workshop at the local environmental education center)
- ▶ **What are 2 things you can do this summer that are smart moves career-wise?** (e.g. asking to job shadow someone in town

doing a job that looks interesting, volunteering to help with a local event as a service and a networking opportunity, determining areas of strength and areas where you need to make an effort next year to gain some experience)

- ▶ **What are 3 things you’d like to learn this summer?** (e.g. how to plant a vegetable garden, some basic meals to cook next semester when living off-campus, how to play tennis)
- ▶ **How can you intentionally work your brain using books, online resources and other media?** (e.g. reading at least one “classic” from the library, regularly following a site with thought-provoking articles such as Slate.com, getting a documentary on a subject like the global water crisis from Netflix)

Here’s to a learning- and experience-filled summertime, filled with valuable brain work!

Low-Cost Ideas for Summer Learning

Summer involvement doesn’t have to be costly! Encourage your student to take advantage of...

- Continuing education classes
- Library, garden center or home improvement workshops
- Free events happening at local colleges
- Websites such as about.com or ehow.com to learn how to do something new
- Nutrition and cooking demos at grocery stores
- Volunteer opportunities with local shelters, agencies and organizations
- Town sports and recreation leagues such as kickball, basketball, volleyball and more



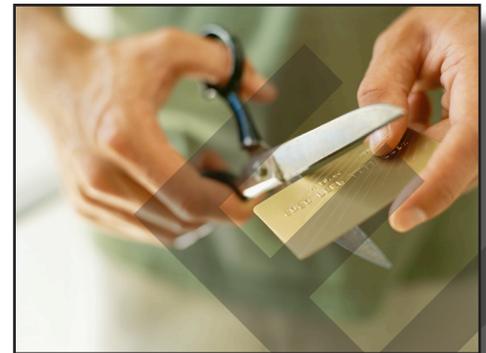
Financial How-to: Protecting Cards & Account Information

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) suggests the following when it comes to protecting ATM, debit and credit cards. You can share this information with your student to ensure his financial accounts stay safe and sound.

For Credit and ATM or Debit Cards

- **Don't disclose your account number** over the phone unless you initiate the call.
- **Guard your account information.** Never leave it out in the open or write it on an envelope.
- **Keep a record of your account numbers,** expiration dates and the telephone numbers of each card issuer so you can report a loss quickly.
- **Draw a line through blank spaces** on charge or debit slips above the total so the amount can't be changed.
- **Don't sign** a blank charge or debit slip.

- **Tear up copies** and save your receipts to check against your monthly statements.
- **Cut up old cards** — cutting through the account number — before you throw them away.
- **Open your monthly statements promptly** and compare them to your receipts. Report mistakes or discrepancies as soon as possible.
- **Carry only the cards you'll need.**



For ATM or Debit Cards

- **Don't carry your PIN in your wallet, purse or pocket** — or write it on your ATM or debit card. Commit it to memory.
- **Never write your PIN** on the outside of a deposit slip, an envelope, or other papers that could be lost or looked at.
- **Carefully check your ATM or debit card transactions;** the funds for this item will be quickly transferred out of your checking or other deposit account.

- **Periodically check your account activity,** especially if you bank online. Compare the current balance and transactions on your statement to those you've recorded. Report any discrepancies to your card issuer immediately.

Source: www.consumer.ftc.gov

Report Loss or Theft Immediately

Acting fast limits your liability for charges you didn't authorize, according to the FTC. Report the loss or theft of your card to the card issuer as quickly as possible. Many companies have toll-free numbers and 24-hour service for such emergencies. Once you report the loss of your ATM or debit card, federal law says you cannot be held liable for unauthorized transfers that occur after that time.

Also...

- Follow up with a letter or email that includes your account number, the date and time you noticed your card was missing, and when you first reported the loss.
- Check your statement carefully for transactions you didn't make and report them to the card issuer as quickly as possible. Send a letter to the address provided for billing errors.
- Check if your homeowner's or renter's insurance covers card thefts. If not, some will allow you to change your policy to include this protection.

What Your Student Needs During Finals Week

- Encouragement
- Knowing that you believe in her
- Your understanding about why he's not in touch
- Something to look forward to
- Concentrated chunks of time to study and prepare
- Good sleep and nutrition
- Not having other things to worry about
- Support, whether it's a "you can do it!" voicemail, a fun e-card or just good wishes, from afar

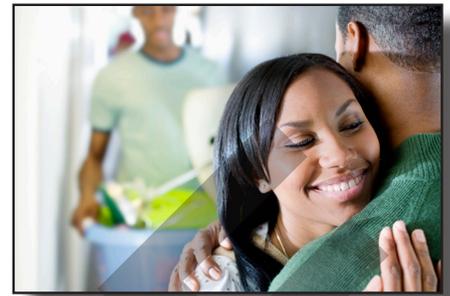
Making Move-Out Day Go Smoothly

Here are a few tips to make move-out day less frustrating for everyone involved, whether your student is moving out of an off-campus house or an on-campus room.

- **Boxes.** Plan ahead to have enough boxes. Many stores will give you some, if you just ask. Or consider purchasing some plastic bins with lids that can be reused time and time again.
- **Plan.** Pack according to what will be needed during the summer. Few things are more frustrating than digging through all the “college boxes” to find the item you need!
- **Hydrate.** Drink water while you’re working. It’s easy to get overheated and dehydrated.
- **Space.** Think about what will fit in the available vehicle. Just because your student’s belongings once fit in the family van in August, it doesn’t mean they haven’t expanded!
- **Prepare.** Ask your student to be packed by the time you arrive. Too many packers can lead to chaos!

- **Storage.** Check into storage possibilities in town, if needed. Think ahead about whether storing the rug, the fridge and other larger items in a storage unit makes more sense than lugging them back and forth.
- **Clean-up.** Be prepared for the amount of time the “after-packing clean-up” will take. Just because all the boxes are in the car, it doesn’t mean that the work is done because room/house cleaning is an important part of the process. Students can lose their deposits and/or be charged if they don’t do a good job sweeping, removing tape residue, taking out trash and recycling.

And leave time for goodbyes. Your student will likely want to see her friends before she goes and, although you may be chomping at the bit to hit the road, this wrap-up time is important. Students are transitioning from one of their worlds to the other during move-out. Some things just can’t be rushed.



Supplies to Have on Hand

- Boxes or plastic bins
- Packing tape
- A few thick markers
- Car carrier (in case everything doesn’t fit *inside* the vehicle)
- Broom
- Dustpan
- Dustrags
- Window cleaner
- Paper towels
- Water (don’t count on vending machines as they can run out when lots of folks are around)
- A fan (if it’s really warm)
- Patience!

Leaving on a High Note

Wrapping up the year right and leaving on a high note is one of the keys to your student feeling good about the past year and looking forward to the next. So, what can that mean for your student?

- **Saying your goodbyes** – not leaving these until the very end, when there’s never enough time
- **Turning in all necessary paperwork** – no need for that to hover over you into the summer
- **Leaving a place better than you found it** – this includes physical surroundings and being sure to leave them in good shape when you move out
- **Behaving well** – don’t put anyone in a bad position as a result of your actions, including you!
- **Thanking faculty and staff** – those folks who made a difference... they’d love to hear it
- **Following up** – whether it’s a debt or a discussion, follow up so nothing is left lingering

Talk with your student about what it means to him to “wrap things up right” and then provide all the support you can as he does just that!