



YOU might just be a "Helicopter Parent" if . . .



- You call your son or daughter multiple times per day, whether they have called you or not.**
- You send IM and text messages to each other...all day...every day...even when your son or daughter is in class!**
- You arrive at the Dean's Office at 7:30 AM to discuss a conflict between your son or daughter and his or her roommate.**
- You completed your son or daughter's roommate housing questionnaire, and registered them for everything!**
- You recognize all of your son or daughter's instructors and many Campus staff by sight, know them by name, and have them programmed into your cell phone.**
- You have your son or daughter's class schedule posted on your fridge and regularly call to see that they are going to class.**
- Your son or daughter is still seeking your permission to make any move that may be considered independent.**
- You know the balance in your son or daughter's checkbook and ask them questions about the last \$20 they spent.**
- You still help your son or daughter with their homework and/or papers for class.**
- You have an account on Facebook® or MySpace.com® and are listed as a "friend" of your son or daughter.**
- You often drive several hours just to bring your son or daughter one of his or her favorite items.**
- Your long distance phone bill exceeds your house payment.**
- You show up for little sibs weekend even though your son or daughter has no brothers or sisters.**
- You know the students on your son or daughter's residence hall floor better than they do.**
- You call and direct your son or daughter to dress appropriately when inclement weather is expected.**
- You regularly call and wake your son or daughter up for class.**
- You know what your son or daughter had for breakfast, lunch & dinner...today...yesterday...every day!**
- You attended all Orientation events with your son or daughter...even when parents were scheduled elsewhere.**
- You drop your son or daughter off at campus, attend parent orientation sessions, shed a tear, drive home, and upon returning home, find your son or daughter eating a meal from your refrigerator in front of your television, sitting in your favorite recliner . . . and you are actually glad to see them home and hear yourself say, "I missed you."**
- You wrote and edited your son or daughter's entire admissions essay.**
- Your son or daughter has the same major as your profession (but they truly want to be studying something else).**
- You call to complain about the temperature of your son or daughter's residence hall room.**
- You are still on campus days after Parent Orientation is over.**
- Your son or daughter doesn't know how to do laundry, iron, sew a button, clean their room, or cook a simple meal.**
- Your cell phone conversations are more "play-by-play" than "heart-to-heart."**



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10 ways to help your student experience first year... SUCCESS!



- 1.) Don't panic or make a "knee-jerk" decision at the first sign of a problem. Give them a chance to mature and work things out on their own.
- 2.) Send unexpected care packages and money, but not too often or they'll become dependent upon them and the surprises will lose their novelty.
- 3.) Pay attention to the seasonal changes and provide the essentials you know they might need.
- 4.) Maintain consistent communication with them even when they don't. Show interest in their performance.
- 5.) Alternate your methods of communication: phone, email, messages, packages, and planned visits.
- 6.) Discuss their financial situation and develop a credit card management program with them.
- 7.) Follow the yearly academic calendar of the school and offer support during times that you know will be stressful for them such as midterms and finals.
- 8.) Realize there are tremendous campus services available to them, many of which are already covered by the tuition you pay. Encourage them to take advantage of these.
- 9.) Be careful about "just showing up and surprising them." Students' schedules can be very hectic and you might just be the one getting "surprised."
- 10.) Remember that you are a friend as well as a parent or guardian. Provide the stability they may lack at school. Over time, they will realize just how lucky they are to have you in their life.

\$50 Letter Idea!



Dear _____,

We are so proud of you! We know how hard it is to adjust to college life, but since we haven't heard from you in awhile we just know that you are making new friends, studying hard, getting involved and beginning to really like it there. We couldn't be happier! Well, hard work deserves a reward, so here is \$50 for you to spend this weekend. Go out, have a great meal, and have a wonderful time with your friends.

Talk to you soon. We love you!

Mom and Dad

There are "necessary losses" we face as adults. Sending our children off to college. Watching them get married and move away from home. Burying our own parents. As parents, we are to raise our children with tremendous love and respect and to prepare them to become responsible members of society. The reason that dropping our children off at college is so hard on us, is that deep down we realize ... we aren't sending them off to college, we're sending them off to life. College is a great way-station on the road to life. Your child will need to decide if they will go to class, get involved on campus, when to get some sleep, what to eat and drink and who their friends will be.

The "pilot" of any helicopter parent is their child. If your son or daughter is encouraging you to make tough decisions for them, and you are cooperating, you may be impeding their acclimation to college and life in general. Are you going to "hover over" their marriage? Monitor how they raise their own children? Evaluate how they perform their job? Scrutinize how they handle challenging situations throughout their life? Your purpose is not to be your child's best friend, it is to be their parent. It is time to encourage them to mature and make important decisions on their own (calling upon the fabric you have laid for them) and allow them to live with the positive and negative consequences of their actions.



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THE MOST COMMON REASONS THAT STUDENTS DROP OUT OF COLLEGE ARE:

- They get homesick, as do their parents.
- The reality of attending college did not match their expectations.
- They fail to form at least one close, meaningful relationship.
- They had an unsuccessful dating and/or social life and felt isolated and lonely.
- They went to college because "it was expected" - not because they truly had the desire to attend.
- They were not prepared to leave home and live independently.
- They were unprepared for the increased academic workload-- and ignored the warning signs until it was too late.
- The college itself was too big or too small for their liking.



- They got lazy, used food for comfort, failed to adequately exercise fell out of shape and ultimately felt badly about themselves and wanted to remove themselves from the situation.
- The college didn't have the area of study they desired.
- Their friends dropped out and they felt left behind.

- They felt the need to attend college "closer to home."
- Money issues became (or seemed) insurmountable.
- Boyfriend - girlfriend issues took precedence (especially in a struggling long-distance relationship).
- A job with a paycheck now seemed more attractive than the promise of a career and a larger paycheck later.
- Their grades didn't cut it due to a combination of any or all of the above and they may have lost a valuable scholarship or other money source in the process.
- Their parents readily accepted their decision to return home rather than challenge them to see if there was a better course of action.
- They have not formed a bond with anyone at the college ... in or out of the classroom.
- They are bored because they are not being challenged.
- Poor time management skills.
- They did not plan on graduating from the institution.
- Poor study habits ... often without realizing they are poor.
- They feel as if they have little access to decision making or decision makers.
- People they rely on for advice do not know about campus resources.
- There are mental health issues (for example, depression) that go untreated.



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How well do you know the first-year college student?

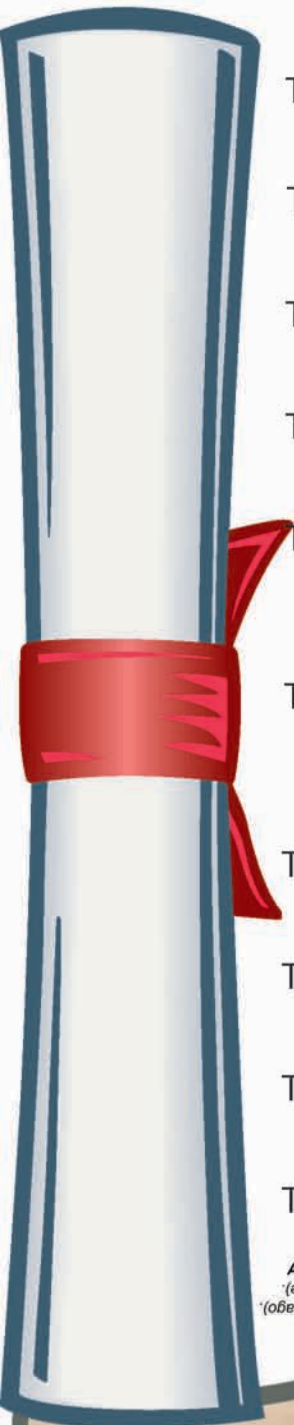


Choose true or false for each question....

- True False 1. When choosing a college major, potential earnings are more important to students than any other factor.
- True False 2. Over half of all college students nationwide reported being on some type of diet in an attempt to control their weight.
- True False 3. The most common substances used in reported date rape situations are Rohypnol ("Roofies") and GHB.
- True False 4. On average, first year college students get more sleep and experience less stress than college seniors.
- True False 5. Students involved in campus activities are 75% more likely to graduate in 4-5 years, than those who choose not to get involved.
- True False 6. The average college student spends more than 40 hours per week in front of a screen (television, computer, video game, movie).
- True False 7. The average parent sends less than \$100 in "spending money" per month to their son or daughter at college.
- True False 8. More than two million college students reported "driving other people around" while under the influence of alcohol.
- True False 9. More than 25% of students reported that they began smoking while in college.
- True False 10. After the first semester of college, parents and guardians have little influence over their student's future decisions.

Answers:

1. T, 2. T (nearly 60%), 3. F (alcohol), 4. F (actually much less sleep and much more stress), 5. T (they feel more connected), 6. T (up from 25 hours just three years ago), 7. F (\$154), 8. T (2.1 million reported), 9. T (28% nationwide), F (students appreciate them more and seek their guidance).



ISSUES

Parents AND Students Should

DISCUSS

Prior To The Beginning of College



- That you can go to class every day and earn a degree or you can get involved on campus and receive an education.
- That homesickness is a natural occurrence and that it works both ways.
- What will now happen to the "open room" at home--does a sibling move in? If so, what happens during a break when the college student comes back home?
- That college won't be a cake walk. There are increased demands and expectations.
- That maturity begins with "cutting the cord" and parents allowing students to make mature decisions on their own.
- That there are numerous resources available on campus to assist students.
- That dropping out and coming home should only be considered as a "last resort."
- To be extremely careful about what you post on Facebook and MySpace.com. MILLIONS of people read these sites and have access to you and your information.
- That a natural "acclimation period" will be necessary for the entire family to adjust to college life.
- You are not alone. An entire class of students is sharing similar experiences.
- Life skills: Nutrition, cooking, cleaning, laundry, sewing, waking up, time management, exercise, budget management, etc.
- Just because a cell phone or email gives us "instant access," it doesn't mean that a "kneejerk reaction" must follow.
- That the school has systems in place to assist your student with just about any problem they may face . . . it is your student's job to seek out that assistance.
- If it is not a "life and death" situation, it will be treated as such.
- That there is "etiquette" involved in developing mutually respectful relationships with faculty members--arriving on-time to class, turning off cell phones, not wearing headphones, not leaving class without seeking permission, asking questions in or out of class to better understand the material and professor, not posting derogatory opinions about them online, etc.
- The Parent-Child relationship has not ended. Rather it has just begun. It will now take on a new form and eventually become an incredible adult-adult relationship.



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