



Excellence • Innovation • Discovery

Your Student's 1st Year

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Believe it or
not....your
student needs
you for more
than money!

Students Ask Their Parents For Advice on:

Finances	35.4%
Career Planning	18.9%
Academics	12.6%
Personal Relationships	7.3%
Health & Safety	5.6%
Involvement Opportunities	2.2%
Other/None	18.0%

Data is from 2004 Survey of University of Minnesota parents

“*Typical*” University Student Has Changed...

Now university students are:

- Older – 52% are > 25 years old
- More women – 80% women
- More ethnic diversity – from > 33 countries
- More part-time status – 42% are PT student
- More materialistic/less philosophical values – focus is job and money
- More students with disabilities
- More supported due to increase in variety and availability of student services

Academics

Issue	How to Help
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Pace of term, time management, study skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Encourage student to buy a daily planner and wall calendar■ Discuss time management skills; share strategies■ Remind them of Study Skills Workshops
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Learning to think critically	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Ask them what they <i>think about</i> what they learned, not just what they learned

Academics

Issue	How to Help
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Experience of the first “C” may affect self-esteem or cause guilt feelings■ Grades may drop by 15% from High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Help students and family set realistic expectations for university work■ Ask how they <i>feel</i> about their classes, not just how they are doing in them■ Share your own struggles and suggestions for coping

Financial

Issue	How to Help
■ Increased cost of education with decreased financial aid = financial STRESS	■ Seek out information on student aid and scholarships – but let your student take responsibility
■ Over 50% of students work; many over 20 hours a week while maintaining a full course load	■ Discuss time management skills and setting priorities ■ Help set realistic goals (number of courses, grades, time to graduate, etc) ■ Encourage students to seek out jobs on campus (www.msvu.ca/careerplanning)

Financial

Issue	How to Help
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ having trouble budgeting money to last through term/year	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ help students develop a budget■ emergency loans available through financial aid office■ DO NOT take over entire process
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ over or inappropriate use of credit cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ warn students about credit cards and loans

Independence

Issue	How to Help
■ Relationship with parent WILL change and usually for the better	■ Support change and be willing to change too
■ Beware of homesickness (can affect success)	■ don't give in right away – encourage to seek out help and provide reassurance ■ Encourage student to stay on campus to adjust
■ Moving from being a big fish to a little fish	■ listen, support, encourage and help set realistic expectations (different from high school)

Independence

Issue	How to Help
■ living with others (who are not family)	■ listen, offer support and suggestions; encourage honest communication; suggest services of RA; don't always assume that roommate is at fault
■ learning to manage own time, money, health and freedom (staying up late, eating junk, partying, etc)	■ acknowledge that mistakes are part of the growing process ■ discuss choices, consequences, and taking responsibility ■ help them assess how they can approach differently ■ Model good self care behaviour

Independence

Issue	How to Help
■ making choices about dating, relationships, and sexuality/sexual activity	■ discuss setting boundaries for self and how to communicate them ■ encourage student to seek information (health office, counselling)
■ making choices about alcohol	■ do not assume student will start or increase use, many don't, be clear on your expectations ■ encourage student to make choice for self (not others)

Independence

Issue	How to Help
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ making choices about alcohol (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ discuss drinking responsibly/safely■ remind student to take advantage of many activities that don't involve alcohol
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ feeling guilty/bad about not being home during a crisis (especially death of family member, pet, etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ never "spare" student because may affect their ability to deal with the issue■ listen to and discuss these feelings■ prepare student and family for events■ Use campus services

Independence

Issue	How to Help
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ students are often dealing with the new stressors of university life (academic pressures, quick pace, body image, new independence, etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ talk to your student about healthy ways to manage stress■ discuss importance of finding healthy balance between academics and social life■ brainstorm ways to ensure they are getting enough sleep, exercise, nutrition, etc.■ suggest they speak to their RA and/or seek out confidential counselling services

Independence

Issue	How to Help
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ students sometimes develop symptoms of depression and/or anxiety for the first time during the university years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ be supportive and listen and be careful to not minimize their feelings (eg., oh...it's nothing)■ encourage your student to seek counselling services and/or health services
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ if your student is currently receiving treatment for depression or other mental health related issue, the transition to university life may trigger new symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ be sure your student is informed about how to best manage and monitor their health■ your student should provide their new doctor and/or counsellor with reports and all necessary information

Fitting In/Finding Friends

Issue	How to Help
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ finding a new group of friends (very important and needs to happen fairly early)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ remind student that friendships take time and effort■ encourage student to be proactive and join clubs on campus, participate in residence activities, play intramural sports, etc. – learning doesn't only take place in the classroom
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ relationships with significant others and close friends back home will change and may end	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ discuss that long distance relationships are very difficult to maintain■ support change, friends may be growing in different ways

Fitting In/Finding Friends

Issue	How to Help
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ trying on new “self” with new look, food, habits, etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ many new habits are short lived and exploratory■ discuss that self exploration is part of determining “who you want to be when you grow up”■ encourage exploration and communicate about changes

What Every Parent Should Know.....

(from University Of Minnesota parent survey 2004)

- When your child calls with a problem, they don't want you to "solve it", they just want you to listen
- That your child is well prepared and you did a good job
- Growth requires making mistakes
- In most cases, parents don't find out until after the fact
- to offer to take friends/roommates for coffee or pizza when you visit. It will be a future conversation starter
- not to be surprised if you don't see much of them the first time they come home.

Final thoughts.....

“One of the most fundamental developmental tasks for college-aged children is that of separation-individuation, or the process of creating for oneself a unique, internally derived identity that reflects each person’s needs, values, beliefs, dreams, wishes, interests, desires, and so on.”

(Rosenberger, 2011)