Just for Parents: Help with the College Transition

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Introductions and Acknowledgements

Why are we here?

• History and growth of program
• Ultimate desire we have for our children:
  – Well-adjusted, healthy, adults who are prepared to face life’s challenges
Overview

• Transitions: Challenges and Opportunities
• What to Expect?
  – The Three R’s
  – Tips for Parents
• University Resources
• Q&A and Reception/Discussion
Remember, no one can wipe your tushy but me!
• What is your transition looking like?

• Many of us are used to constant and immediate access
Anxiety

• “Have I done enough?”
• “Are they prepared?”

Opportunity to celebrate!

• Reflect on your investments in your child
• Consider the challenges, bumps in the road, etc. Yet each of you are sitting here!
What To Expect?
The Three R’s

Responsibilities

Relationships

Resilience
Responsibilities

1. Practice Piano
2. Comb Hair
3. Brush Teeth
4. Pick Up Room
5. Make Bed
6. Homework in Bag
7. Snack in Bag
8. Bag, Shoes, Coat @ Door
Responsibilities

- Bye-Bye daily oversight
- Being responsible for their own choices and outcomes
- Fosters self-reliance and sufficiency
Responsibilities

- Time Management
- Sleep
- Study Habits
- Nutrition
- Laundry
- Relationships
- Scheduling appointments
- Finances
- Exercise/Movement
- Other self-care
Tips for Parents

• Give them space to try it on their own

• Expect there will be mistakes and missteps

• View these as learning opportunities

• Experience is the best teacher!
But just in case.....

Carbona Color Run Remover

“Clocky Alarm Clock
Tips for Parents

• But do discuss the importance of self care and important issues like sleep, nutrition and alcohol

• Help provide a healthy framework for what is healthy and “normal” as their peers may not model that behavior
Alcohol and Other Substances

• Parents can help set the tone
• They will listen to your messages
• Acknowledge and empower them to make choices
• Educate them about potential consequences
• Talk about alternatives, resources for support, and how to help a friend
Relationships
- Friends from home
- Roommates
- New friends & peers
- Professors
- Family
Friends From Home

“The Hardest Part of leaving for college is leaving my high school friends.”
Relationships

Roommates
Roommates

IN THIS CORNER: Roommate #1

PING!

IN THIS CORNER: Roommate #2
New Friends & Peers
Relationships

Professors
Family

• Texts, calls, Skype, letters, packages

• Remember to let them know what is going on at home

• Let siblings communicate as well
Tips for Parents

• Let them call you
• Listen more than talk, don’t be an investigative reporter
• Talk with them now about what they feel comfortable with in terms of frequency of communication
• College is a time of self-preoccupation. This too shall pass!
• Encourage your student to get involved in at least one extracurricular activity in the first semester
• Coach them to stay on campus most weekends, especially during the first semester
Resilience
Life is not about how fast you run or how high you climb but how well you bounce.

~Vivian Komori
• Instant connection

• Instant soothing from others

• Less “alone” time

• Reliance on others to problem solve for them or rescue them
Tips for Parents

- Be there to listen

- Show your confidence in them by prompting your student to generate possible options for problems

- Promote the philosophy of “This too shall pass” or “Sometimes you win, sometimes you learn”

- Early homesickness does not predict poor adjustment to college
Tips for Parents

• Remind them of a time they faced adversity and how they bounced back - share your own stories

• Struggling with adversity and strong feelings builds resilience

• Encourage them to take chances

• Be a safety net, not a safety harness
When To Be Concerned

- Anxiety Spectrum
- Depression
- Problematic Eating and Body Image
- Alcohol/Drug Abuse and Dependence
- “Process” Addictions
- Stalking/Bullying
- Traumatic Life Events
When To Be Concerned

“If I do notice red flags, what can I do?”

• Remember good communication skills
• Express your concerns directly, without judgment, and with love
• Know available resources and how to access them
When I was a boy, and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.'

-Fred Rogers
WFU Resources

- University Counseling Center
- Student Health Service
- Office of the Chaplain & Campus Ministries
- Office of Multicultural Affairs
- Residence Life & Housing
- LGBTQ Center
- International Students & Scholars Office

- Learning Assistance Center & Disability Services
- Office of Personal & Career Development
- Writing Center/Math Center; Tutors
- University Police
- Office of Academic Advising
- Women’s Center
• Letter from a student
• Introducing campus experts
• Audience Q&A
Welcome to the Wake Forest Family!

Reception & Discussion

Wake Forest University