Easing Transitions

Center for Counseling & Student Development (CCSD)
Located in the Wellbeing Center at Warner Hall – 280 The Green
Wellbeing at UD

A foundation of health, wellness, and belonging that enables self-efficacy

Wellbeing infused throughout the system
The Center for Counseling & Student Development

- Initial triage and referral (on and off-campus)
- Brief, structured coping skills groups
- Short-term individual and group therapy
- Single sessions, Let’s Talk
- Daytime and after-hours emergency availability
- Consultation with students, parents, faculty, and staff
- Presentations around campus for students, staff, and faculty
- Licensed Psychologists, Counselors, Advance Practice Nurses, Psychiatrists
- UD Helpline 24/7/365: (302) 831-1001
- udel.edu/counseling
Feeling anxious, depressed or overwhelmed?

UD Helpline is here for you.

302-831-1001

Being a Blue Hen means having access to assistance. Reach a counselor any time of day or night at the phone number above, or visit udel.edu/counseling to learn about the many services that we offer.

Center for Counseling & Student Development
You’ve Got This!

A four week intensive group experience

- To learn skills and strategies to reduce anxiety and emotional distress
- To build resilience and coping skills to foster positive adjustment to college
Preparing for College

It’s a developmental process for everyone
It began when they took their first steps
You’ve probably already noticed the changes starting as they prepare to be more self-sufficient (summer...)

[Image of students carrying items]
FAQ from parents: The Drop-Off

- How will I know when it’s time to leave? (Drop off veterans, you know the answer...)
- You say, “When do I leave?”
- Your student says, “When will they leave?”
The Drop-Off

• Unload
• Help them set up their room
• Take a picture...
• It’ll never look like this again...
There’s a lot to navigate this year. We’re here to help.
Developmental Challenges for Emerging Adults

- Homesickness and/or culture shock.
- Making new friends, fitting in, finding your place.
- Relationships, break-ups.
- Changes in academic performance from high school or previous institution.
- Handling disappointments, adjusting expectations.
- Self-esteem and confidence.
- Identity development; can be especially difficult for marginalized groups.
- Family Transitions (death, divorce).
- Career Development.
- Stress & Anxiety Management.
Will my student do as well in college as they did in high school?

College is harder than high school.

We expect grades to initially be lower.
Freedom vs Responsibility

• Who am I?
• How do I handle my emotions like disappointment?
• Where am I headed (what will I be when I grow up)?
• Can I rely on myself and those around me?

• Developing integrity and affirming of values
Psychological Changes

This is another in-between time – a threshold.

Mixed messages: I don’t need your advice...can you do my laundry?

Students need both your growing trust in their competence and your steady nurturance when they feel vulnerable.

You are their safe base.
Mark Twain

When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be 21, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years.
New Role for Parents

● Move from expert to empathic consultant
  ○ Scaffolded approach
    Works best for maturational crises - the more novel or severe the crisis, the more you will need to step back in

● Why?
  ○ They need to own their choices in order to develop decision making skills
  ○ So you can eventually retire.
How to Navigate the New Role

• Encourage use of campus resources.

• Encourage careful thought and problem solving.

• Remember, mistakes are great teachers.
Communication

• How often will you call or accept calls/texts?

• How often will you EXPECT calls/texts?

• A great question to ask yourself:
  – How is your contact fostering your student’s growing competence as an adult?
Productive Conversations

1. Have your student explain the problem; don’t interrupt.

2. Offer cues: ‘How can I be helpful? What do you think you should do? What options are you considering?’

3. Help your student evaluate their choices, but don’t choose for them.

4. If they still seem stuck, ask, ‘What do you imagine my advice would be?’

5. Be assuring and supportive: ‘I think you can handle this.’
   ...At the same time, let them know that ‘No matter what, I’m here for you.’

Adapted from the Jed Foundation
Researching and Reaching out to RSOs

• Check out Student Central: studentcentral.udel.edu
• Information Fair is the first and easiest time to meet/greet/sign up with RSO – First Monday (day before classes start)
• Organizations include, but are not limited to:
  – Dance, Music, Performing Arts
  – Technology, Gaming, Programming
  – Racial and Religious Affinity groups
  – Politics, Debate
  – Advocacy, Community Service
  – Fraternity/Sorority Councils
  – Hobbies
Your Student’s Mental Health

• Talk about stress as a family and how your student copes with it
• If necessary, develop new and stronger coping mechanisms this summer
• Discuss importance of sleep, diet, medication, social life, & academics
Your Student’s Mental Health

● Check insurance coverage: does it cover out-of-state counseling?
● **Make a plan** if your child has preexisting mental health concerns
  ○ Do they have enough medication?
  ○ Have they found a therapist in Newark, DE?
  ○ Have you discussed an emergency plan?
  ○ Schedule appointments in advance for holidays at home.
  ○ Register with Disability Support Services
Prepare for The Return of the First-Year

- Before you know it, they will come back home.

- After being at college, you will want to be prepared to discuss
  - Curfew
  - Rules of the house /changes/ consistencies

- It’s still your house. But your student has been managing their own lives and freedom.

- The sooner these conversations happen, the better.

- Communicate and negotiate.
How do I act when I come to visit?

• Plan ahead. You will likely want to pamper them.

• Your son or daughter is unlikely to discourage this...

• Call ahead! Surprise visits are surprising for everyone...
Prepare for the Loss of a Daily Household Member

● One fewer person for dinner?
  ○ Maybe the first family member to leave home
  ○ Maybe the last family member to leave home

● A new phase and evolution for everyone in the family

● You continue to be the parent and/or caregiver

● Prepare younger family members

● 60% return to live at home at some point the year after graduation
Set to Go
(settogo.org)

Online resource center to help parents and students focus on emotional health before, during and after the college transition.

The Tools and Information You Need
There are skills that will help you thrive as you get ready to leave high school. Here you’ll find information, tools and guidance to help you feel Set to Go - whether you go to college or straight to a career.

Introductory Articles
- Planning Ahead for Your Mental Health Care as You Transition to College

Introduction
More and more young people are headed to college with an already diagnosed mental health condition. Many of them have been in some sort of therapy, take one or more medications, and receive support services through their high school, from private tutors and/or other agencies. For
Suggested Reading

- Letting Go: A Parents' Guide to Understanding the College Years
- You're On Your Own (But I'm Here If You Need Me): Mentoring Your Child During the College Years
- 7 Steps for Success: High School to College Transition Strategies for Students with Disabilities
- The Naked Roommate and 107 Other Issues You Might Run Into In College
CCSD is here to help your student succeed!

Thank you!