



Counseling Support Services

We offer brief individual mental health counseling, group counseling, consultation and referrals, campus mental health outreach and education and a lending library. Our services are free & confidential for full- time students. Your student can stop by or call for an appointment, 773-244-4897. We are located at 3317 W Foster Ave (#24 on the campus map). We are open Monday through Friday 9am-4:30pm.

Common Mental Health challenges for college students

Stress related to:

- Greater academic demands
- Exposure to new people, ideas, and temptations
- Making new friends/social network
- Living on your own, in a new place
- Relationship issues, like dating
- Financial responsibilities

Potential feelings of:

- Homesickness
- Loneliness
- Depression
- Anxiety, feeling overwhelmed
- Difficulties adjusting

Mental Health challenges may be new to the college student, or existing mental health challenges may be exacerbated. Transitions are hard!

Support is essential

This is the first time many young people will be away from home. It’s a big step and almost inevitably one that will cause anxiety. Parents/guardians, and other supports might be anxious too! How do you plan for and manage this transition? How do you know when your college student might need you to intervene and lend some help or support?

BEFORE YOUR STUDENT STARTS COLLEGE

- Talk about the importance of taking responsibility for their health and the need to let you know if any problems should emerge.
- Get familiar with student support resources.
- Talk about how frequently you will have contact with your college student. They may want to communicate more frequently in the beginning as they adjust to college.
- Talk about what decisions, challenges, choices or difficulties you expect your college student to handle on their own; On which decisions will they seek your input, and at what point and/or under what circumstances should they ask for help.

ONCE YOUR STUDENT IS AT COLLEGE

- Keep in touch; Make calls productive – “how can I help? What do you think you should do? What options are you considering?” Help them work through choice, but don’t make the choice if you can avoid it.
- If you’re worried, ask. Trust your gut.
- Look/listen for changes – signs of a problem may include changes in sleep, changes in eating patterns, headaches, irritability, recurring illness, trouble concentrating, increased negative emotions, poor grades.
- Use campus support services

You’re both learning, be flexible.



MORE TIPS ON HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR COLLEGE STUDENT

Adapted from "9 Tips on How to Be at Good College Parent", washingtonpost.com, Amy Joyce, 9/2/14 & "20 Tips for the Families of All Students", University of Maryland, adapted by Brian L. Watkins, Director of Parent and Family Affairs, from "20 Items I Wish I Could Discuss with the Families of All Students" by Michael J. Kiphart, Dean of Student Affairs, Carroll Community College.

Think about your parting words. Whatever wisdom you have to offer, whether it is 'I love you,' 'I'm behind you,' 'I'm proud of you,' say it. If you can't express yourself verbally, write your thoughts down and mail the letter to your child immediately after you arrive home.

Your lives will change. Be prepared for differences in your relationship with your student. Be patient. Understand that it will take a while for everyone to find their footing in this evolving relationship dynamic.

You won't be able to wait for them to come home — or leave. Your student will arrive home with a whole new set of habits, particularly when it comes to food and sleep. If your student is living at home while in college, make sure to give your student his/her own time and space.

Don't change your student's room. The student's room is 'home base' — try not to change it very much during his or her first semester away. Freshmen in particular can go through some very difficult times. Give them a 'safe haven.'

When a problem arises, "move like your feet are stuck in molasses." The temptation is to intervene when your student calls with a problem. Remember that many resources exist at college to help students cope with various situations. Express support but give your student time to solve their own problems—it will ultimately benefit them.

Don't expect the same grades in college that the students got in high school. Expect early GPA's to be low and later ones to be better. Brand new college freshmen are actually successful high school students who are at college. They need time and experience to learn how to be college students at college. This takes at least one semester. Be patient and understanding.

Children in college don't become "college students" overnight. They start out as high school students at college. It takes time to learn how to be a college student — how to study, how to eat, how to do laundry, how to play, how to handle money, etc. Be patient — This process requires at least one semester.