



Health & Wellness

August 2017

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Preparing your Teens for University

Thousands of teens will be heading off to university in a few short weeks. For many of them, it will be the first time living away from home. The change may be a big upheaval for the entire family but doing a little research and knowing what you can expect can help ease the transition.

Accommodations

At this point, living arrangements will already have been made – dorm living or off-campus housing. Know what the payment requirements are, when the keys will be available and what access codes (if any) are required. Also determine the move-in schedule – do you have an assigned time or do you have to contact a landlord to arrange an elevator reservation? Know what furniture you need to bring and have it ready for move-in day. You may want to arrange a walk through before moving in to make sure you don't bring furniture that won't fit the space.

Consider tenant insurance for any damage or loss of property while living there.

Communication

Of utmost importance for most teens today is staying connected. Pre-arrange for internet access at their residence so it's ready to go on move-in day.

If your child is going to school outside of your local area, you may need to change cell phone plans. Check out the details with your provider to avoid unexpected over charges.

Meal Plans

Varying levels of meal plans are typically available for both on- and off-campus students. They are convenient but may be expensive. Consider supplementing the meal plan with home cooking. Maybe now is the time to teach your teen meal planning, budgeting, and cooking skills.

Health Care

Most schools have a health insurance plan for students and include the cost on the tuition invoice. Often it is an automatic enrollment. Students may opt out if they can provide confirmation that they have coverage under their parent's plan.

Students are typically covered under their parents plan until they are age 21. At that point, ***you must advise the insurance company that the child is a full-time student in order for coverage to continue. This must be done each year the child returns to school*** until they are no longer eligible (age 25). The age limits can vary by contract so check your employee handbook for details specific to you.

Finances

Post-secondary school is expensive. Beyond tuition, there are costs for living expenses, text books and school supplies, extra-curricular activities, etc. Make sure your student has a budget and knows how to live within it. Credit card debt can be crippling so make sure they know how to use credit responsibly.

Support

Orientation week volunteers do a great job of welcoming new students and providing them with information and resources to integrate into student life.



Our intention is to provide information about healthy living and achieving a balanced lifestyle. It is not meant to replace medical, legal, financial, or other professional advice. Always consult the professional directly related to your own circumstances before making decisions about your personal well-being.



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Beyond the initial welcome, students living in a dorm have a don assigned to them. This person is usually a senior student who lives in the same building and provides support – student/campus resources, emotional/well-being support, helps resolve issues within the dorm, and general oversight of new students. Students living off campus also have school liaisons to help them integrate into student life. Research how to access these services before leaving for school and connect with them soon after arrival.

Parents may need support too. Your child is an adult and leaving the nest. It can be a difficult transition. Understand that your job as a parent is not over but your role may change. The family dynamics may feel a bit different but that's ok. If you're struggling with the change and you have an employee assistance plan included with your benefits, access it for a myriad of resources.

As you and your teen enter this new phase of life, let them know that you're there to support them but also encourage them to stand on their own. You do not need to rescue them each time they find themselves outside of their comfort zone. Learning how to handle new experiences is part of the process and will help them grow as a person. Of course, if something becomes too overwhelming make sure you and your teen know how to access resources to get help.



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