

# HOW PARENTS CAN SIMPLIFY STUDENT'S TRANSITION TO COLLEGE LIFE

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College is the first taste of true independence many young students experience. Whereas mom and dad were always around to make sure kids were out the door on time and homework was done, that safety blanket is no longer there once kids move into their dorm rooms.

The transition to college life can be exciting. But while students typically welcome that transition with open arms, parents often worry about how their children will handle their suddenly more independent life. Parents who want to help their kids make as smooth a transition to college life as possible can take steps during their children's senior year of high school to help them adjust to their new surroundings and responsibilities more easily.

## LET KIDS FLY SOLO ON SCHOOL DAY MORNINGS.

New college students have to make many adjustments upon moving into their dorms,

and getting themselves out of bed each morning and off to class on time is one such change. Parents worried that their students will sleep in when mom and dad isn't around to remind them to wake up can start letting kids fly solo on school day mornings during their final year of high school. Let kids set their alarms, prepare their own breakfasts and get out the door on time all on their own. By the time their freshman year of college arrives, kids will know how to handle their mornings by themselves.

## TEACH KIDS HOW TO DEVELOP BUDGETS.

Another problem many first-year college students encounter is an inability to effectively manage their money. Whether you plan to give kids an allowance while they are in school or intend for them to work part-time for their spending money, use senior year of high school as an opportunity to show kids how to budget

their money. If they don't have accounts already, open bank accounts in your youngster's name, and insist that he or she start paying for his or her expenses via these accounts. Resist the urge to give high school kids gas money or money for shopping trips if they have already spent their allowances so they can learn how to effectively manage money between paydays. In addition, teach kids about the right and wrong ways to use credit cards, including the importance of paying balances in full and on time.

## LET KIDS HANDLE MORE STANDARD RESPONSIBILITIES.

Adults tend to take more mundane responsibilities like making doctor's appointments or grocery shopping for granted. But kids likely have no idea how to handle such tasks. Parents can encourage their high school seniors to make their own medical appointments. In addition, take

kids along on grocery shopping trips, explaining how to find sale items and which foods to buy and which to avoid. Nutrition is not always foremost on the minds of college freshmen, but those who understand the importance of healthy diets are more likely to buy nutritious meals than junk food.

## EMPHASIZE TIME MANAGEMENT.

Today's high schoolers are busier than ever before, so many may already be prepared for the juggling act that is college life. But college students have more free time than their high school counterparts, so parents can emphasize the importance of managing that free time wisely as opposed to spending it lounging on the couch or napping.

The transition from high school to college can be both exciting and difficult. But parents can get a head start on that transition by encouraging their youngsters to be more independent during their final year of high school.

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