

Parenting Your Student During Orientation



It is inevitable that you and your student will experience moments of stress and awkwardness during the college orientation program. You and your student will have different ideas about what needs to get done when, which tasks are priorities, and how to go about navigating campus orientation events and activities. Additionally, you might be feeling anxious about this next phase in your student's life, and your student probably has concerns too, but during the first few days most students are focused on moving forward, getting settled, and jumping fully into college life.

Consider These 10 Parenting Strategies During Parent & Student Orientation:

1. **Encourage your student to lead the way** and to make decisions as the day unfolds;
2. **Explore and learn what you want to know** while you are physically at Berklee (this can be done independent of your student);
3. **Monitor any stress that you are contributing** and do what you need to limit it;
4. **Remind yourself that there are many options and many right ways** to do things;
5. **Slow yourself down** – when we physically rush we feel and project more stress;
6. **Share positive feedback** when you notice your student:
 - **makes a good decision;**
 - **communicates effectively with others;**
 - **takes initiative.**
7. **Give your student time & space without you** – even just a few minutes here and there;
8. **Avoid speaking for your student** or completing his/her sentences;
9. **Offer to brainstorm with your student more than give advice** as opportunities to make decisions arise;
10. **Decide on a time when you will depart for the evening** and meet up the next day.

If or when things get tense it is perfectly fine to say, “I am just going to take a few minutes to step out. I sense that I am starting to feel more stressed than I would like to and it's probably not helping us right now.” Consider keeping a book with you or a pad of paper and take a few moments to direct your focus toward something else. Even calling a friend for a few minutes can help to relieve stress. The last thing that you want is to be arguing before you head back home. In that moment your student needs to know that you see him or her as a competent individual, ready to succeed and to make the most of his or her college experience.

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