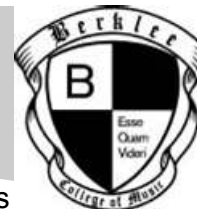


Parenting Your Student During the Fall Semester



The fall semester typically has peaks, drops, and twists turns that can shake up even the most experienced parents. Both entering and returning students encounter a number of new experiences that lead to either opportunities or challenges. Fall semester is a time of constant adjustment – new living situations, new professors, increased academic expectations, changing relationships, etc.

Consider These 10 Parenting Strategies During the Fall Semester and Beyond:

- 1. Learn about common challenges that students face during the fall semester and think in advance about how you want to respond** – concentrate on what you hope your student learns from the situation.
- 2. Don't think "solve"** – but if/when your student is reaching out to you to be involved, then partner to brainstorm solutions, options and possible next steps with your student -- resist solving the problem or fixing the situation.
- 3. Don't react with negativity** when your student shares a difficult or less than desirable situation – in that moment he or she seeks for you to be steadfast while he or she processes all that is going on.
- 4. Remind yourself that there are many options and many right ways** to do things.
- 5. Keep communication open through casual conversation and open-ended questions** – needing to know or telling your student what you think will shut down communication in an instant.
- 6. Share appreciation and positive feedback** when you notice your student:
 - makes a good decision;
 - communicates effectively;
 - takes initiative;
 - talks with you about something that is difficult to share.
- 7. Have a communication code phrase** (that is only rarely used) **that means "I really need you to respond to me now."**
- 8. Know what campus resources exist and how each might benefit your student** -- encourage your student to access various offices and/or administrators to gain support, to clarify next steps, to seek assistance, etc.
- 9. Let your student know what he or she can expect from you** and identify which parenting patterns will change, e.g., "I'm not going to give you advice, but I'll brainstorm options with you."
- 10. Treat each semester as a new beginning** – don't assume that your student will exhibit the same patterns and behaviors.

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