

## Transitioning Your Student the Summer Before College



The summer before college usually begins with the joyous occasion of high school graduation, and as summer progresses the stress level for family members and their college-bound student grows with every passing week. A lot of focus is directed toward the student, but other family members are experiencing a range of emotions and heightened concerns during the summer months too. If your student is home the summer before heading off to college there are a number of ways that you can guide and support your student's transition. Think about it -- when a student gets to college he or she is immediately required to:

- Live with people whom they might not choose as roommates
- Share a bathroom
- Manage health and wellness
- Navigate a new city for the first time
- Live away from home for the first time
- Be responsible for time management
- Talk with lots of unfamiliar people and authority figures who do not know them
- Move from perhaps being the star student in their school to being one of many stars
- Share their talents and competencies
- Care for personal needs
- Manage money or a budget
- Maybe shop and cook
- Learn new expectations, rules and policies
- Pay bills, etc.

And if this isn't enough, they are also going to classes, juggling homework, maybe working part-time and getting involved in co-curricular activities. Phew!

### Consider helping your student in the following ways this summer:

- Consider visiting Boston with your student to help him or her really learn the city and to feel comfortable with the various transportation options, locate a pharmacy and grocery store, etc. This can then be second nature by the time the student arrives for college;
- Look at various campus resources and supports together that are featured on the college's website, so that your student knows in advance what is available and how best to access it;
- Throughout the summer create opportunities for your student to communicate with adult authority figures and people with whom your student is unfamiliar. Have your student make the appointments, send the e-mails and be the one asking questions, etc.;
- Have your student manage his or her time this summer – waking up by himself or herself for instance – and if not getting to things on time, it is better to experience this now and figure out a solution, rather than having it continue into the opening weeks of college;
- Anticipate with your student possible scenarios of things that might occur in college and have your student think out loud about possible action steps and desired outcomes;
- Ask your student what concerns him or her most about the opening weeks of college, and think together about a strategy to mitigate it.

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