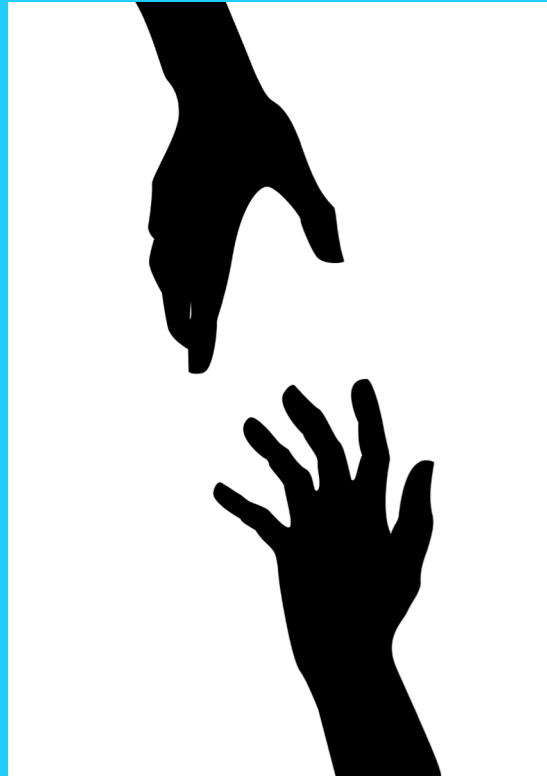


Don't cry in the shower—read this book!



**LETTING GO:
A PARENT'S GUIDE TO A
SUCCESSFUL COLLEGE SEND-OFF**

Less stress in your empty nest

College Fit 360



Letting Go: A Parent's Guide to a Successful College Send-Off

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Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Administrative Steps to Take	3
Forms.....	3
FERPA.....	3
Insurance.....	4
Registration.....	4
Life Skills to Teach	5
Finances.....	5
Transportation.....	5
Organization and Study Habits.....	6
Self-Care.....	6
Physical Health.....	6
Mental Health.....	6
Planning for Life Apart	8
Staying in Touch.....	8
Homesickness.....	8
Promote Self-Advocacy.....	9
Adjust Expectations.....	9
Expect a Major Change.....	9
Sharing is Caring.....	9
Don't Forget About Sex, Drugs, Alcohol, and Rock 'n" Roll.....	10
The Merch.....	10
Stuff That Can Help	11
Books for Parents.....	11
Online Resources for Parents.....	11
Books for Students.....	12

Introduction

Dear fellow parent,

The day you've both yearned for and feared has finally arrived. Your child is leaving for college. Yes, you'll need plenty of tissues, and, yes, you'll be writing more checks than you ever have before. But there are a number of other things you can do to make this transition successful for both you and your child. Thinking through these issues, and talking about them before your child leaves for college, is an opportunity to help make college the transformative experience it was meant to be. When graduation day rolls around in four (or five or six ☹) years, you'll be happy that you had a handle on letting go.

Sincerely feeling your pain,

Roberta & Joan

P.S. Remember to change the locks so they don't try to move back.

Administrative Steps to Take



No one likes paperwork, but it's a fact of college life. Here are some essential administrative items that have to be handled before college begins:

FORMS

Your child will be sent a number of documents relating to their college living arrangements: campus housing, meal plans, roommate preferences. These choices will help define their college experience, so make sure they complete and return them by the deadlines.

FERPA

It's the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, and it's a law that keeps a student's records private...meaning you have no right to see them. Have your child sign a waiver of FERPA rights with the school's registrar's office in order to give you access to communications regarding tuition and grades. Beyond the fact that you're footing the bill, this access will allow you to spot any problems early on.

[FERPA Info](#)

INSURANCE

At nearly every school, students are required to have health insurance. Many colleges offer their own plans, in which case you may choose it or opt to keep your child insured under your family plan. If you elect to stick with your current plan, make sure that your student will have access to providers near to where they will be attending college. Also, make sure to waive the school's insurance or you will be billed for it.

[Student Health Plans and Other Options](#)

REGISTRATION

Your child's school will have them register for classes online during the summer. It's critical that your student meet deadlines in order to get the classes they want. This is even more important on certain campuses where some classes are not offered often, causing students to take more than four years to graduate.

[8 Tips for Choosing College Classes](#)

Life Skills to Teach

Yes, they may look like adults, but do they know how to get what they need without asking you how to do it? If you think there might be some gaps, help them gain experience in the following areas:



FINANCES

Decide how your student will pay for things while they're away at school. Will they have a checking account? A debit card? A credit card? Before they leave, give them some experience both with budgeting and using whichever form of currency you choose. Make spending limits clear in order to avoid overdrafts or being surprised by huge bills.

[Teaching Your College-Age Child About Money](#)

[Credit Card Tips for your College Student](#)

[Feed the Pig](#)

TRANSPORTATION

Have your student become acquainted with the transportation options in the area of their college. Do students ride bikes around campus? Does the school offer shuttle services? Is there public transportation? If they will be taking a car, they should contact the school to ensure that freshmen are

allowed cars and find out if they'll need a special permit to keep it on campus.

ORGANIZATION AND STUDY HABITS

Emphasize study and organizational skills during the last semester of senior year. Remind students that group work, taking notes and using some kind of calendar will be necessities once they're in college.

[Study Skills for College Students](#)

SELF CARE

Your kid may know how to build a computer but may still be baffled by the basics of taking care of everyday needs. Make sure they know how to do laundry, cook simple things, clean a bathroom, and set an alarm clock.

[Nine Things to Do Before Your Kid Goes to College](#)

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Before your student goes away, model and discuss a healthy lifestyle. Serve balanced meals, exercise, and go to sleep at a regular time each night. Mention the benefits of such behavior – mental sharpness, energy, emotional stability.

[A College Guide to Eating Healthy](#)

[The Student's Guide to Nutrition](#)

MENTAL HEALTH

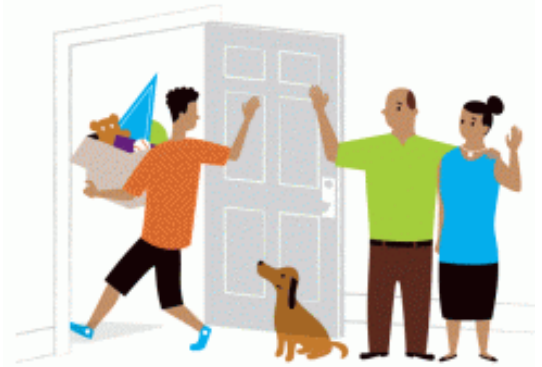
Let your student know that depression and anxiety are common among

college students. Seeking help and support as soon as possible is the smartest thing your kid can do. Find the addresses and phone numbers of support services and put them into your kid's phone.

[College and Your Mental Health](#)

Planning for Life Apart

Let's face it, once they're gone, we've basically lost control. Still, there are steps to take to minimize anxiety both for those at college and on the home front. Expect some glitches and plan accordingly:



STAYING IN TOUCH

Make a plan to keep in touch. To ensure that you have a good handle on how your child is doing, agree on a schedule of phone calls or Skypes. Be upbeat when you speak to your college kid--they're already dealing with the stress of change. Don't add to their woes by worrying them about minor problems at home. Make note if they miss a scheduled call; it may be a hint that something is going on.

[4 Tips for Keeping in Touch With Your College Student \(Without Being Overbearing\)](#)

HOMESICKNESS

Almost every kid will have a moment when they say, "what am I doing here?" It's a combination of buyer's remorse and abject fear. Stay patient and don't jump into problem solving mode. Instead, assure your child that this, too, will pass--and mean it.

[Homesickness Isn't Really About 'Home'](#)

PROMOTE SELF-ADVOCACY

If your kid calls and says they didn't get a course they wanted, or their dorm room is drafty, it's not up to you to jump in and fix things. Encourage your kid to seek out the appropriate resources--facility managers, academic advisors, etcetera--and deal with by themselves.

[Does Your College Student Know How to Advocate for What She Needs? Getting Accommodations](#)

ADJUST EXPECTATIONS

Particularly if they're a high achiever, prepare your kid for not necessarily being the best student in the school, but being the best student they can be. A successful college experience is one during which kids take academic risks by stepping out of their comfort zones and trying new things. Over-focusing on grades may deter this.

[Adjusting GPA Expectations in College](#)

EXPECT A MAJOR CHANGE

What we mean is...a change in "major." Don't panic. Most kids change their majors somewhere along the line. While the earlier, the better, in terms of catching up with required courses, don't catastrophize this common event.

SHARING IS CARING

Remind your kid that they're probably not going to have their own room. This means sharing, remaining patient, and learning to communicate

in an even tone. Sometimes roommates become life long friends, sometimes they don't. Either way, your kid will have to live in harmony for at least a semester, so help them get ready to loosen up.

[5 Tips for Getting Along With Your Roommate](#)

DON'T FORGET SEX, DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND ROCK 'N' ROLL

Ok, forget rock 'n' roll. But have frank conversations about being safe and not being pushed beyond their personal boundaries. Most kids try out new behaviors in college, but they need to be aware of the pros and cons of these behaviors and actions they can take to minimize risk. No driving under the influence. No sex without protection. Your kids will roll their eyes and tell you they already know all of this. Maintain your cool and tell them again anyway. Their embarrassment should not deter you from providing them with sage advice. Once you're done, find a quiet, out-of-the-way place to scream.

[Precautionary Steps Parents Can Take](#)

THE MERCH

Your child will need some basic items for their home away from home—sheets, towels, a desk lamp. Not sure what to pack and how to get it there? Make use of the Bed, Bath and Beyond College Service.

[Bed, Bath and Beyond College Service](#)

Stuff That Can Help

BOOKS FOR PARENTS

[Letting Go: A Parent's Guide to Understanding the College Years \(Cohen and Treeger\)](#)

[The iConnected Parent: Staying Close to Your Kids in College \(and Beyond\) While Letting Them Grow Up \(Hofer and Sullivan\)](#)

[Don't Tell Me What to Do, Just Send Money: The Essential Parenting Guide to the College Years \(Johnson and Schelhas-Miller\)](#)

[Out to Sea: A Parent's Survival Guide to the Freshman Voyage \(Radi\)](#)

[You're On Your Own \(But I'm Here If You Need Me\): Mentoring Your Child During the College Years \(Savage\)](#)

[University Parent Guide to Supporting Your Student's Freshman Year \(Schwemm\)](#)

[Your Freshman is off to College: A Month-to-Month Guide to the First Year \(Hazard and Carter\)](#)

[In Addition to Tuition: The Parents' Survival Guide to the Freshman Year of College \(Borden, Burlinson and Kearns\)](#)

[When Your Kid Goes to College: A Parent's Survival Guide \(Barkin\)](#)

ONLINE RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

[College Parents of America](#)

[9 Tips on How to be a Good College Parent](#)

[College Parent Central](#)

[Advice for Worried Parents as Children Head to College](#)

[Grown and Flown](#)

[Checklists for Parents of College Students](#)

[How to Successfully Parent Your College Student](#)

BOOKS FOR STUDENTS

[Been There, Should've Done That: 995 Tips for Making the Most of College \(Tyler\)](#)

[The Naked Roommate and 107 Other Issues You Might Run Into in College \(Cohen\)](#)

[It's the Student, Not the College: The Secrets of Succeeding at Any School Without Going Broke or Crazy \(White\)](#)