



RANDOLPH-MACON WOMAN'S COLLEGE

May 2007

Seasonal Student Issues

There's a seasonal ebb and flow when it comes to student issues. Here are a few things your student may be experiencing this month:

- **Anxiety and tension due to realizations that the year is ending and final exams are about to occur**
- **Senior Panic about jobs, finances, etc.**
- **First-year students are feeling somewhat confident because they feel that they have made it through the first year (almost!)**
- **Good feelings are evident as summer is near**
- **Lots of cramming, studying and wrapping things up academically**
- **End-of-the-year socialization**
- **Packing and checking out**
- **Saying goodbye to important people and putting closure on the year**

The Summer Return

Whether your student is moving home this summer after being away at school or he's going to be around more when classes end, there's going to be an adjustment period for everyone involved. By talking about a few things upfront, you can make the transition smoother and much more pleasant!

- **Expectations.** Students often return home after experiencing a year of independence and self-responsibility. Being told what to do and when can be a shock to their system. So, sit down and discuss everyone's expectations for behavior, curfews and more right off the bat. Don't talk *at* your student, though; instead, talk *with* her. And listen to her perspective, too, as you come to a mutual understanding about how the summer will go.
- **Finances.** Does your student have a clear understanding regarding how much money he needs to save up this summer? Have you discussed things like spending money, work expectations and more? Again, having this proactive discussion in May is *much* better than reacting poorly in August.
- **Family Responsibilities.** Incorporating your student back into the everyday flow of your family's life may involve some growing pains. What chores will she pick up? What obligations are in place



that she should plan for (i.e. the July family reunion, the June graduation party)? Get out your calendars for a family meeting where

you can all plot out the summer and come to mutual agreements about shared tasks and time.

- **Transportation.** If your student doesn't have his own vehicle, he may ask to borrow yours. Determine how this will work so you're not feeling taken advantage of and so he knows the limits. Plus, discuss public transportation possibilities, biking, shared rides and more—a car isn't the only viable answer!
- **Shared Space.** Living under the same roof for the summer can be a wonderful time of connection. Yet, it'll take some work and, likely, some compromise. Students who are used to their own space at college will need to adjust to living in the family house again—and you'll need to adjust to them being there again! What does this mean when it comes to laundry, meals, noise and more? Talk about it now.

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A key to lifetime success

Emotional Intelligence

You may have heard about “Emotional Intelligence” and how important it is for students to develop this quality. Higher levels of “EI” can help them build solid relationships, develop leadership skills and become more successful in life.

According to Daniel Goleman, author of *Emotional Intelligence*, EI is “the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, for managing

emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships.” Goleman states that EI drives two-thirds of an individual’s performance and that it is four times more important than IQ in terms of overall success. In other words, book smarts aren’t the only thing that will lead your student to a positive, productive life.

EI Capabilities

An emotionally intelligent person demonstrates the ability to:

Know herself

- † Able to assess herself realistically
- † Has deep understanding of her own strengths, weaknesses, needs and drives
- † Recognizes how her feelings affect herself and others

Manage his feelings and impulses

- † Controls bad moods and emotional impulses
- † Chooses his words carefully
- † Avoids hasty judgments
- † Creates an environment of trust and fairness

Be self confident, with a firm grasp of her own capabilities

Understand social dynamics

- † Understands how an organization/group works
- † Able to sense how people are feeling
- † Understands various viewpoints
- † Brings conflict out into the open
- † Willingly collaborates across boundaries

Be socially advanced

- † Has a talent for finding common ground with people of all kinds and has a network of people in place when the time for action comes
- † Committed to helping people improve
- † Friendly with a purpose: moving people in the direction they desire
- † Excellent persuader, collaborator

As your student develops these capacities, she’ll have the ability to change and grow, and to be flexible and responsive while engaging others. These are the building blocks of leadership and managing relationships that will lead your student to a lifetime of success all the way around.

Developing Emotional Intelligence

Students can develop Emotional Intelligence through activities such as:

- † learning to really listen to others instead of always thinking about what they’re going to say next
- † collaborating on programs and projects
- † getting to know people in a variety of groups instead of just sticking to their comfort zones
- † engaging in community service, especially when it involves interacting with others
- † taking on a leadership position within a club, team, work or organizational setting
- † working with others whenever possible, whether it’s getting a hall volleyball team together or creating a study group
- † mentoring others and focusing on how to help *them* succeed
- † taking personality and skills inventories through the career services office
- † talking through issues and emotions with someone from the counseling center in an effort to know themselves better

What Your Student Needs During Finals Week

- ◆ encouragement
- ◆ knowing that you believe in her
- ◆ your understanding about why he’s not in touch that week
- ◆ something to look forward to
- ◆ concentrated chunks of time to study and prepare
- ◆ good sleep and nutrition
- ◆ not having other things to worry about
- ◆ support, whether it’s a “you can do it!” voicemail, a fun e-card or just good wishes from afar



Compare notes for the summer ahead

Summer Plans

The summer is going to fly by and, pretty soon, your student will be returning to college for another year.

What are a few things you want to fit in during these summer months?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

What does she want to fit into this summer?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



Now talk about how your lists can intertwine so that no one is disappointed or feeling left out. Communication continues to be the key as you and your student forge an adult relationship. Best of luck!

Summer Fun!

Create some simple rituals to spend quality time with your student this summer:

- ✓ morning walks before work
- ✓ going out for ice cream
- ✓ watching younger siblings' baseball games, plays or whatever!
- ✓ reading the Sunday paper together
- ✓ working on home/garden projects
- ✓ making a quilt together
- ✓ sitting on the front steps, talking about your day

The Scholarship Search

Your student has abilities and talents—you know how true this is! Scratching below the surface to find scholarships that will recognize these abilities and talents is easier when you have useful resources at hand. Here are a few to recommend to your student:

- Fast Web at www.fastweb.com
- College Board at http://apps.collegeboard.com/cbsearch_ss/welcome.jsp
- National Scholarship Providers Association Member List at <http://scholarshipproviders.org>
- Scholarships.com at

www.scholarships.com/

- The Smart Student Guide to Financial Aid at www.finaid.org/

Plus...

The National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators sponsors free Free Application for Federal

Have Questions About Federal Aid?

- ✓ Call 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243)
- ✓ Visit Frequently Asked Questions at <http://studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/faqs.jsp>
- ✓ Contact your financial aid administrator

Student Aid workshops in many states through College Goal Sunday at www.collegegoalsundayusa.org/.

The Season for Thieving

End of the year thefts can be easily prevented with a few simple precautions:

- **Textbooks.** By writing his name near the binding of a certain page in each textbook, a student can tell public safety what to look for if a book is stolen.
- **Locking Doors.** For both personal and property safety, encourage students to keep doors locked.

Thieves become familiar with people's patterns.

- **Unattended Goods.** Leaving a book bag on the study table or failing to lock it up during a workout increases the chances of it walking away.
- **Laptops.** These are BIG targets. Does your student have a laptop safety device? Is the computer engraved with an ID number?

These precautions can help track down laptop thieves more easily.

- **Cash.** It's never a good idea to have large amounts of cash on hand.

Gently remind students that the end of the year is one of the hottest times for thieves to strike. By taking some simple precautions, they can avoid some complex headaches.

A “Summer Curriculum”

Since your student is in the academic mindset, talking about a “summer curriculum” might make a lot of sense to her. This just means being intentional about the things she’d like to learn and experience this summer.

Maybe she’s been talking about how she misses reading “real” books because she always has reading to do for class. This can go on her curriculum. Or maybe she’s hoping to learn how to kayak or knit or ride a horse... put it on the curriculum!

And make it a partnership by suggesting that the whole family write out your summer curriculums. Then share them so you can support one another in pursuit of these goals. Here’s to a summer filled with learning!

The Summer Return

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■ **Visitors.** College students get used to making their own decisions about who will come to visit and how long they can stay. Yet, when living with the family again, these decisions need to be made collectively, so as not to disrupt anyone. Let your student know that you welcome visits from her friends, as long as you have advanced warning. Discuss parameters while also encouraging her to keep up those important college friend connections.

Having your student home for the summer can be a wonderful thing, as long as you talk out some possible kinks before they grow into big problems. So, get out the coffee and gather around the kitchen table to talk through this transition. As long as you communicate from the get-go, you’ll be okay.

A Hassle-free Move Out Day

Here are a few tips to make move-out day less frustrating for everyone involved, whether your student is moving out of an off-campus house or an on-campus room:

- ▲ plan ahead to have enough boxes—many stores will give you some, if you just ask
- ▲ pack according to what will be needed during the summer—nothing’s more frustrating than digging through all the “college boxes” to find the item you need
- ▲ drink water while you’re working—it’s easy to get overheated and dehydrated
- ▲ think about what will fit in the available vehicle—just because your student’s belongings fit in the family van in September, it doesn’t mean they haven’t expanded!
- ▲ check into storage possibilities in town, if needed—think ahead about whether storing the rug, the fridge and other larger items in a storage unit makes more sense than lugging them back and forth
- ▲ ask your student to be packed by the time you arrive—too many packers can lead to chaos
- ▲ be prepared for the amount of time the “after-packing clean-up” will take—just because all the boxes are in the car, it doesn’t mean that the work is done because room/house cleaning is an important part of the process—students can lose their deposits and/or be charged if they don’t do a good job sweeping, removing tape residue, taking out trash and more
- ▲ know where to put trash—have your student find out where to dump trash and recyclables

And leave time for goodbyes. Your student will likely want to see her friends before she goes and, although you may be chomping at the bit to hit the road, this wrap-up time is important. Students are transitioning from one of their worlds to the other during move-out. Some things just can’t be rushed.

Move Out Supplies

- ✓ boxes
- ✓ packing tape
- ✓ a few thick markers
- ✓ car carrier (in case everything doesn’t fit *inside* the vehicle)
- ✓ broom
- ✓ dustpan
- ✓ dusting rags
- ✓ window cleaner
- ✓ paper towels
- ✓ water (don’t count on vending machines as they can run out when lots of folks are around)
- ✓ a fan (if it’s really warm)
- ✓ patience

