



a newsletter for parents & families



GEORGIA'S PUBLIC LIBERAL ARTS UNIVERSITY

University Housing

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Preparing for the Fall Transition

As students prepare to transition to college, chances are that the emotions can get overwhelming at times, especially amid pandemic realities.

They may be anxious about making a fresh start in a new place. Or they may be excited to reinvent themselves, but not sure how to go about it. And the issue of finding that sense of “belonging,” with people and a place that feel comfortable, is likely on everyone’s minds.

You can help with this transition by preparing your student well. Some ways to do so include...

Look at Club/Organization Options Together. Investigate the possibilities for involvement ahead of time. Encourage students to make lists of everything that sounds good to them, without censoring themselves whatsoever. Just that action alone can make coming to campus an exciting prospect!

Then, you can talk through options, support them in their quest to try new things and they’ll be ready to see what awaits when they join us in the fall.

Reminisce about Past Risk-Taking. Maybe your student once joined a high school club, even without knowing anyone, and wound up making great new friends. Or maybe he joined an organization to challenge



himself and discovered new skills and interests in the meantime.

Help your student think back to these scary risks that resulted in good things so he has more confidence to do the same once he gets to campus.

Talk Intentionally about Goals. What does your student hope to accomplish in her first month on campus? Starting with short-term goals like this can help her get in the college mindset.

Assist her in creating realistic goals for the first month, from academics to involvement to making connections. Then, encourage her to put a few action steps in place to help her reach those goals.

As students look toward the fall term, preparing themselves for the transition will involve focusing on their strengths, their past successes and all the possibilities that lie ahead!



Getting in Touch with Transferable Job Skills

The things your student gets involved with can help lead to a job down the road. One of the things to keep in mind are those transferable skills, which are core skills developed in one arena that can then be applied to a new professional role.

For instance, you can help your student see how her role organizing campus fundraisers can possibly transfer to a job working in development for a college, arts organization or not-for-profit. Or maybe his experience studying abroad can potentially transfer to a job within a diverse organization where he'd work with people from multiple cultures.

To help your student get in touch with those transferable skills, consider discussing the following questions...

- What are some ways that you have demonstrated how trainable you are?

Examples of Transferable Skills

- Supervising other students as a student union manager = management skills
- Handling confidential information as an RA = trustworthiness
- Collaborating with other campus groups to sponsor a program = teamwork
- Working as the officer of a campus organization = leadership
- Participating in a global village living-learning community = diversity skills

- How have you demonstrated leadership skills?
- What are some ways that you have demonstrated reliability?
- How have you demonstrated a commitment to teamwork?
- How have you demonstrated a sense of trustworthiness?
- What are some ways that you have put management into action?
- What are some ways that you have shown a commitment to diversity?

By getting in touch with these answers, students will find that their skills can be transferable to a variety of employment situations. And they'll be better able to speak to that fact in cover letters and interviews as a result!

New Student Issues

Students preparing to dive into college for the first time may have a lot of things on their minds these days, such as...

- Feeling sad about leaving established friends and family at home
- Concern about issues of "belonging" and finding a comfortable place on campus
- Wondering how pandemic realities will play out
- Excitement coupled with anxiety about making a fresh start
- Worry about academics being "hard" and beyond their abilities
- Thinking about what type of first impression they'll make
- Concern about roommates and housing (if living on campus)
- Wondering what to pack and what to leave at home since space will be limited
- Possibly transitioning into a long-distance relationship or deciding to end a current relationship
- Financial worries – wondering if they'll be able to make enough during the summer and how much they'll need to work once school begins

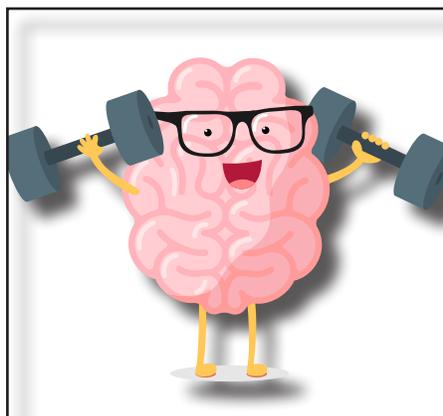




10 Ways to Keep Our Brains in Shape

Keeping the brain in shape is a year-round pursuit. Yet, during the summer, many students don't use their brains in the same, knowledge-seeking manner as they do during the regular school year. So, here are some simple ways for them to jog that noggin' – and for you and your family to join in the action!

1. Play word and number games like Sudoku and Bananagrams. Do crossword puzzles and word jumbles. Thinking logically to accomplish these tasks stretches the brain muscles.
2. Eat fish and other Omega-3 brain foods!
3. Test your memory recall after being in a large group setting, whether it's a church picnic or a family reunion. See how many names and relationships you can remember.
4. Read a book with multiple characters that you must work at



5. Listen to public radio in the morning or watch world news in the evening to keep in touch with what's happening in the world.
6. Learn something new online – and then bring it up in conversation so you must explain it to others.

7. Move around – an active body contributes to a healthy mind!
8. Write something regularly, whether it's a letter, an email or a journal entry, just to keep those skills in practice.
9. Pick up a newspaper or news magazine when waiting to get your oil changed or your hair cut. Those few minutes reading substantial "stuff" can keep the brain from getting rusty.
10. And, take risks to learn something new. If there's a local writer's series, go listen to the authors who are speaking. If there's a local farmer's market, buy a vegetable you haven't tried before and look up a good recipe for it.

Learning is all around and keeping the brain limber and ready for the new academic year ahead is often much easier than you think!

Creating a First Impression

Students heading to college for the first time may be thinking about the first impressions they'll be creating. Will people like them as they are? Do they need to change something about themselves? What could it mean to start fresh with people who've never known them?

All of this is very natural to consider when starting anew in a new place with new people. It could be a good chance for your student to do some introspective self-study. Are there things about her that can be off-putting, such as being quick to anger or so sarcastic that people don't know how to take her? If so, the thought of starting fresh and making a positive first impression can help her address these characteristics before they cause problems.

However, it's also important that students don't change who they are, just so others will like them! You can help your student to embrace his qualities, while also reminding him that there are so many kinds of people at college that he's bound to find those with whom he'll connect. Everyone can find a place here – and we're looking forward to helping your student do just that!





Being a Coach & Encourager

One of the key roles that parents and family members can play during their student's time at school is that of coach. This is different from doing things *for* students or setting them off completely on their own. It's a more nurturing, developmental approach that can have great results!

Coaching Strategies

Listen to Your Student Talk About Her College Vision. What is she looking forward to, what does she hope to accomplish, what will equal success in her eyes?

Inspire Him to Unlock His True Potential. Encourage self-exploration, trying different classes, meeting new people and getting involved so he can explore what fits best. You can ask leading questions to help this process along.

Providing Encouragement

As students dig into their college life, they may sometimes bite off more than they can chew. That can manifest into an overwhelming class load, too many hours at work or taking on student leadership positions in bulk.

One of the roles of a coach is to encourage students to "add rungs to their ladder." They don't need to take huge steps all the time – sometimes they can add smaller steps in between to help them get where they want to go.



Encourage Her to Act. This is something she needs to do on her own; no one else can do it for her!

Empower Him. Some students may not fully know where to begin, so adapt a "yes you can!" attitude and talk with him about things he can do, one step at a time.

Solicit Suggestions. Instead of putting words (and actions) in your student's mouth, let her contribute to the process too. It's important that she learn to trust her own ideas and instincts, rather than purely leaning on those of others.

Provide Tools. Do your own campus research so you can point out resources he can tap into, from the career center (it's not just for seniors!) to the wellness center to the study abroad office.

Encourage Creativity. There's nothing saying that your student must do things the same old way! Encourage her to tap into creative ideas, ways of thought, problem-solving strategies and more.

Energize Him. We all need a boost now and then to keep us going. Provide him with the energy that comes from having someone recognize a job well done or root him on in person, when possible. He'll feed off your energy!

Push Her Toward the Journey. While it's easy to get derailed from our path sometimes, having a coach to push us along and provide encouragement makes it easier. Talk with your student about how she's feeling being on a certain path and try not to make demands that she stay on that path if it's not feeling right. There are plenty of variations that might fit her more effectively.

Encourage Reflection. As you coach your student through his college process, make sure that both of you set time aside to reflect on how things are going. The process of doing without reflection isn't half as satisfactory, or effective!

Areas of Growth

Consider asking your student: What are some things you'd like to learn, areas you'd like to improve on or experiences to pursue? Encourage him to make a list of 5 growth areas he'd like to focus on. This will help make his efforts at college more intentional, while also leading him toward a major, a career and a life he is proud to live!