



a newsletter for parents & families



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## Working Smartly and Efficiently: A Time Management Plan for the Year Ahead

Smart time management is a key path to success this academic year. You can help your student by discussing time management strategies with her, such as...

**Using In-between Times.** That 45-minute chunk of time between a class and a meeting can be used wisely instead of wasted. That's several pages of reading for a class, studying for a quiz or calling home. Those in-between times add up quickly!

**Not Over Scheduling.** There comes a time in some students' schedules where they just can't fit anything else in. So, learning to say "no" is important. It's much better to be realistic than trying to be all things to all people. The latter is bound to disappoint someone and to overwhelm your student.

### Time Stealers

Random texting, Internet surfing, spending hours on video games or Snapchat... all are Time Stealers. Gently ask your student if this is how he wants to be spending his precious free time.

**Recognizing That Stuff Steals Time.** When you have too much stuff in your living space, you spend more time looking for things. By doing a "stuff purge," your student will be better able to get to things quickly while staying more organized.

**Decompressing Your Mind.** A stressed, overactive mind is not as time efficient as a calm, collected one is. So, whether your student uses breathing techniques, exercise or other stress management tools, it's important to make them a natural part of her everyday life.

**Choosing Not to Guess.** Rather than guessing about a class assignment or paperwork that needs to be turned in, encourage your student to go directly to the source and ask! Calling the Financial Aid office or stopping by an instructor's office hours to get the real scoop will save buckets of time wondering and



pondering. By choosing not to guess, your student will be able to get to the task at hand with confidence.

**Avoiding Weekend Reliance.** During the busy weekdays it's easy to say, "I'll get to that over the weekend." However, weekends often get full, plus it's important for students to give themselves some down time, too. So, encourage your student not to rely solely on weekends as his time to get most things done. Instead, he can dose it out over the weekdays, for maximum efficiency.



# 10 Key Components of Civil Dialogue

Your student may have passions and opinions about certain topics – and we certainly celebrate that! Students who engage with ideas and issues are bound to get more out of their college education.

The key with all of this, however, is learning to engage in respectful, civil dialogue with the people around him. It's true, we can all get a bit hot-headed and excitable when we're discussing topics that we have a passion for. Amid the excitement, however, having civil conversations should be a goal. It's how we open ourselves to learn from one another, listen, gather varied perspectives and not lapse into disrespectful name-calling and uncivilized behavior.

As your student comes to campus, here are some key components of civil dialogue for him to keep in mind...

## Emotions

Chances are that emotions will be heightened during certain discussions, based on individual perspectives and life experiences. Trying to see things from someone else's point of reference can lead to more compassionate, productive conversation.

1. Be Respectful
2. Listen More Than You Speak
3. Admit When You're Wrong
4. Agree to Disagree
5. Be Open to Other Ways of Thinking
6. Steer Clear of Condescension
7. Use Inclusive Language
8. Don't Match Aggression with Aggression
9. Acknowledge Others' Concerns
10. Engage

Here's to a year filled with engaging, respectful conversations that can enrich everyone!



## 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...

- A desire to feel connected to campus
- Roommate adjustments
- Exploration and acknowledgement of personal values
- Long distance relationship strain
- Feelings of loneliness and homesickness may increase
- Experimentation with alcohol and other drugs
- Getting acclimated to a new type of academics
- Figuring out how to get organized and manage their time
- Searching for a sense of belonging





# Handling Mistakes with Integrity

It's a fact of life that your student is going to make mistakes during the college years. Some will be small missteps – like forgetting to set her alarm for that 8 am class – while others will be whoppers such as failing to turn in a paper on time or misusing her power as the leader of an organization

Whatever the case may be, how your student chooses to handle mistakes is a sure sign of her level of integrity. It's important to operate as a

person of integrity so that others trust her. Cutting corners, passing the buck, refusing to take responsibility and more are all signs of someone who isn't trustworthy.

Consider sharing some mature ways to handle mistakes with integrity with your student...

**Admit When You're Wrong.** It takes strong character to say, "I was wrong." It may feel uncomfortable at

the time, yet most people are bound to respect you for it. Admitting when you're wrong not only demonstrates human fallibility, it admits a willingness to hold yourself to certain standards.

**Apologize for Any Harm.** If you inadvertently offended someone or did them harm somehow through your misstep, be very upfront and apologize. You can't take away what you did, yet your genuine remorse and desire to mend fences can make a big difference.

**Don't Pass the Buck.** Some people misplace blame to make themselves look better. In the moment, it may feel good, yet it won't feel right in the long run. And people are very perceptive to this kind of thing. They'll likely be able to sense when you're trying to build yourself up at the expense of others.

These positive strategies – and more – will help your student handle challenges with the utmost of integrity.

## When Your Student Makes a Mistake...

1. Does she face up to it and take responsibility?
2. Does he ignore it and hope it'll be overlooked?
3. Does she apologize if anyone was harmed?
4. Does he embrace it as a learning opportunity?

If your student is doing #2, it's time to take a good hard look. Is that the type of person he or she wants to be?

## Connecting to Campus

To feel connected to campus and establish a sense of belonging, there are multiple strategies your student can try...

- Check out a student organization meeting
- Say yes when someone suggests heading to the dining hall
- Participate in intramurals or a pick-up game
- Attend faculty office hours
- Go to a campus program or event
- Invite hallmates to play ping pong, Fortnite or cards
- Comment positively on a classmate's contributions
- Participate in a campus exercise class
- Ask a residence life staffer if you can help lead a crafting (or some other) workshop
- Join a campus musical/theater/arts group

There are many options on campus for connections – often those that are built in to the fabric of our community. Encourage your student to give things a try rather than holing up with technology. The face-to-face connections can make all the difference!





# Academic Success Strategies

Successfully handling college academics requires some intentional strategies. Here are a few to share with your student...

**Keep Up.** College academics are likely different than what you experienced previously. There's absolutely *no* shame in asking for help if you're having trouble keeping up! Do it sooner rather than later so you can tap into help from your instructor, the learning center, tutors and more.

**Pursue Topics You Enjoy.** Take on a project or topic that you *want* to spend time with, rather than one that you feel you *should*. The process will be so much more enjoyable and interesting!

**Know and Be Known.** Get to know your professors and TAs. Stop by office hours or right after class. Ask for clarification when you're unsure about a topic and show you're interested in being the best learner you can be. Being a known student is better than being

an anonymous, unknown element.

**Go to Class.** Part of being that known element is going to class regularly! You just won't learn as much or benefit as much if you're not there, ready to learn.

**Be Respectful.** What instructors *will* remember is if you're disrespectful when they're trying to teach. So, don't text during class, talk loudly with classmates, use obscenities or publicly shame them in any way. Bring up concerns privately, in a calm manner, so that you're being respectful.



**Create a Study Space.** Having an academic space to work in can help you create the right mindset, while having the needed tools close at hand. Brainstorm ways to set up this space or to find other spots on campus where you can get the academic peace, quiet and inspiration needed.

**Put in the Work.** This one may seem simple, yet it makes *all* the difference. Do the reading, keep up with assignments, study for exams, participate in group work and take responsibility for your learning. No one can impact your academic success the way that you can.

Following these suggestions will help students work smart and come out with favorable results. Here's to your student's academic success story this fall!

## Just So You Know...

- It's a sign of *strength* for students to seek help when they're struggling.
- Professors *want* students to interact with them.
- There's no skating by in college – students *need* to put in the work to see positive results.
- Getting involved in co-curricular activities typically *helps* most students stay on track with their academics, too.

