Just for Parents and Families: Help with the College Transition

Dr. Joanne Clinch - Student Health Service
Dr. James Raper - University Counseling Center

Wake Forest University

Wednesday, August 23, 2017
Introductions and Acknowledgements

Why are we here?

• Ultimate desire we have for our children:
  – Well-adjusted, healthy, adults who are prepared to face life’s challenges
Overview

• Transitions: Challenges and Opportunities
• Tips on How to Support Your Child
• University Resources
• Hearn Plaza: Q&A and Reception/Discussion
Remember,
no one can wipe your
tushy but me!
Anxiety
• “Have I done enough?”
• “Are they prepared?”

Opportunity to celebrate!
• Reflect on your investments in your child
• Consider the challenges, bumps in the road, etc. Yet each of you are sitting here!
The Three R’s

Responsibilities

Relationships

Resilience
Responsibilities
Responsibilities

- Time Management
- Sleep
- Study Habits
- Nutrition
- Laundry
- Relationships
- Scheduling appointments
- Finances
- Exercise/Movement
- Other self-care
Tips for Parents

• Transition from role of the *supervisor* to that of *consultant*

• *DO* discuss the importance of *self care* and important issues like sleep, nutrition and alcohol

• Help provide *a framework* for what is *healthy* and “*normal*” as their peers may not model that behavior
Responsibilities

Alcohol and Other Substances

- Parents can help set the tone
- They will listen to your messages
- Acknowledge and empower them to make choices
- Educate them about potential consequences
- Talk about alternatives, resources for support, and how to help a friend
Relationships
Friends From Home

“The Hardest Part of leaving for college is leaving my high school friends.”

New WFU Friends

Roommates
IN THIS CORNER: Roommate #1

IN THIS CORNER: Roommate #2
Family

- Stay in touch: Texts, calls, FaceTime, SnapChat, packages

- Remember to let them know what is going on at home

- Don’t talk about weight (or appearance in general)
Tips for Parents

• Remember that college students are constantly balancing “what’s going on in here?” with “what’s going on out there?”

• Encourage your child to pursue opportunities that involve their interest to connect with new people and try something new

• Help them understand that it is normal to feel excitement, homesickness, connected, disconnected all at the same time

• Be their consultant around problems so they learn how to navigate to solutions on their own.
Resilience
Life is not about how fast you run or how high you climb but how well you bounce.

~Vivian Komori
Road Blocks to Resilience: Fear of Failure

- Fear of stepping outside of their “comfort zone”
- Fear of not appearing “perfect” Instagram/ FB
- Lack of experience with set backs
- Well-intended “rescuing”
Tips for Parents

“Sometimes you win, sometimes you learn”
John C. Maxwell

“Failure is not an outcome - failure is not trying”
Sarah Blakely (Founder of Spanx)
“Do something everyday that scares you”
Eleanor Roosevelt
Tips for Parents

• Anticipate problems early on - normalize it

• Remind them of times they have struggled and have made it through

• “Share your own struggles”
And humor never hurts!

Cheer them on with Bitmojis!
Tips for Parents

• Resist the impulse to “fix it”

• Transition to the role of consultant

• Create conversation that builds problem solving
HAS YOUR CHILD CONTACTED YOU ABOUT A PROBLEM?

REMEMBER THAT OLD ADAGE...

STOP, DROP, AND ROLL

TOGETHER WE CAN PROMOTE INDEPENDENCE

THROUGH STUDENT PROBLEM-SOLVING

STOP

...and take a deep breath when your student contacts you with a problem. Is it really something he or she cannot solve on his or her own? If you try it for him/her, does that help your student develop independence?

DROP

...the urge to reach out and immediately begin fixing things. Instead, push back with questions. What might you do? What options are you considering? What campus offices might have resources? Additional deep breathing may be required.

ROLL

...with it. Let your student do the problem-solving on his/her own. The long-term benefits of building problem-solving skills and independence will last your student a lifetime.

In the Event of a Serious Issue or Concern about Your Student or Others

While we encourage you to let your student navigate his or her Wake Forest experience as independently as possible, if you have an urgent concern about the health, safety, or well-being of your student or others, there are offices available to assist you.

University Police
336-758-5591 (non-emergency)
336-758-5091 (emergency)
24/7 Dispatch Center: dispatch@wfu.edu
Admin Offices: police@wfu.edu | police.wfu.edu

Student Health Service
336-758-5218 | shs@wfu.edu | shs.wfu.edu
Nurse available at the Health Service with physician on-call back-up after clinic hours (5:00 p.m. to 8:30 a.m.) Monday through Friday and 24 hours a day on Saturdays and Sundays during the Fall and Spring semesters.

University Counseling Center
336-758-5273 | counselingcenter.wfu.edu
Access to a WFU crisis counselor is available to students and concerned loved ones 24/7 by calling 336-758-5273.

Office of Family Engagement
336-758-4237 | parents@wfu.edu | parents.wfu.edu
parents.wfu.edu/faq/ (Parents and Families FAQ with answers to many frequently-asked questions)

After hours assistance
Most administrative offices work on a Monday-Friday 8:30 am-5:00 pm schedule.

If you have an urgent need to reach someone at the university because you have a concern that must be addressed quickly, we have designated the University Police as our 24/7 contact. They can assess the situation and determine who best to address your concern.

The 24-hour contact number for University Police is 336.758.5591 (non-emergency) or 336.758.5911 (emergency). They can get in touch with on-call duty staff 24-hours/day.
When To Be Concerned

- Anxiety Spectrum
- Depression
- Problematic Eating and Body Image
- Alcohol/Drug Abuse and Dependence
- “Process” Addictions
- Stalking/Bullying
- Traumatic Life Events
When I was a boy, and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.'

-Fred Rogers
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<th>WFU Resources</th>
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<td>• University Counseling Center</td>
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<td>• Student Health Service</td>
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<td>• Office of the Chaplain &amp; Campus Ministries</td>
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<td>• Intercultural Center</td>
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<td>• Residence Life &amp; Housing</td>
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<td>• International Students &amp; Scholars Office</td>
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<td>• Learning Assistance Center &amp; Disability Services</td>
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<td>• Office of Personal &amp; Career Development</td>
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<td>• Writing Center/Math Center; Tutors</td>
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<td>• University Police</td>
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<td>• Office of Academic Advising</td>
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<td>• Women’s Center</td>
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Sept 15/62

Dear Janie,

When you read this you will be all alone and wondering about your future. If you are doing the right thing and so on and so on. You may be alone and lonely but in your heart and mind we will always be together.

Always remember, my darling.

Everythine we have done has been for the best.
Welcome to the Wake Forest Family!

Reception to Follow on Hearn Plaza