COLLEGE PARENTS MATTER: MOMENTS TO CHECK IN WITH YOUR STUDENT

The college years can be hard sometimes. With your help, your student will feel supported in making healthy decisions for themselves and have a happier and more successful experience! Here are some behavioral health conversation prompts and reminders to talk about with your student throughout the year.





Make sure your student knows campus resources that can help. Do they know which services are offered at the health and counseling centers?

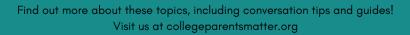
Use fall family weekend or another visit to check in with your student about their well-being (sleep, mental health, nutrition, etc.).

Fall means football (or other sports)! Give them some ideas for tailgating that don't include alcohol.

Halloween in college can be really fun, but sometimes students feel pressure to drink alcohol to celebrate. Encourage them to start new traditions!



- It's finals season! Have a conversation over Thanksgiving break about how they can manage stress during their upcoming exams.
- "How are you, really?" **Set aside some time during winter break** to talk about how their fall semester went. Include topics like grades, relationships, social life, etc.
- Ask if they've felt any need for support services and if they've taken advantage of campus resources. Discuss any barriers they feel to getting help.
- Discuss "break boundaries". Even if your student drank while away, it's still appropriate to communicate your expectations at home. High-risk events can include the Wednesday night before Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve.





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- Spring Break is here! What are their plans? Cruises, trips to the beach, etc. can involve high-risk drinking and funding them for your student might mean inadvertently paying for alcohol. Help them explore alternatives such as a "staycation" or a service trip.
- The cold, early spring months can exacerbate mental health concerns.

 Check in regularly and encourage your student to use campus resources.

 Offer to help them navigate the system.
- High-risk drinking "holidays" include St. Patrick's Day, Cinco de Mayo, and graduation, but they don't have to be high risk! Help them explore safer options.
- **Encourage self-care habits** like good sleep, nutritious snacks, and relaxation strategies during finals. Many schools have "de-stress" events available.



- If your student will be new to college in the fall, <u>now</u> is the best time to talk with them about alcohol. College Parents Matter has lots of resources available to help make these conversations effective.
- If your student will be moving off campus, this is a great time to talk with them about alcohol, and how they can make their home away from home a place where they can succeed as a student. College Parents Matter has specific guides for talking about off-campus housing.
- If your student has any ongoing mental health care needs (counseling and/or medications), talk with their school to understand how your student can continue to access that care while away from home.