

Counseling Tips for Student Families and Supports

Families often ask how they can balance ongoing support with “letting go” as their students begin their college experience. Here are some tips that might help families and other support people in a student's life with this important task.

- **Stay in touch!**
Even as the student is excited about the increased independence and ability to make more choices, they still needs to know that family members are available to talk about issues, problems, and exciting new opportunities that arise. They want to know that understanding and support is still there. Call, text, email, send letters, and visit, although you may need to negotiate timing and frequency of contacts.
- **Be a good listener.**
If your student calls and sounds distressed about their campus experiences, listen, but don't panic. They may have just had a single bad day and need to “vent” to you, or it might actually be anxiety or depression. Remind them that UE counselors can help with stress management, positive coping strategies, or techniques to minimize symptoms of anxiety or depression.
- **Expect some changes in relationships and interactions.**
Many students will develop important connections with peers and significant faculty members. This is an important part of gaining personal identity and autonomy and can assist the college student in making a positive transition after graduation.
- **Encourage your student to get connected on campus.**
Numerous student organizations and clubs are available to help students get connected to others. This helps students develop a sense of belonging and campus pride, and helps them begin to develop a pattern of healthy balance between work and personal enjoyment.
- **Expect an adjustment period related to academic expectations and demands.**
UE accepts intelligent and high functioning students from across the country and the world, and this will provide an exciting and stimulating campus environment for your student. Some students who earned top honors in high school may be surprised at the increased level of academic challenge and expectation at the college level. Encourage your student to use academic support services and faculty guidance, if needed, as they make this challenging transition.
- **Encourage your student to use the resources available on campus.**
UE offers support and guidance in a variety of offices, including the following:

Career Services	International Student Services
Center for Academic Advising	Writing Center/Tutoring
Counseling Services	Religious Life
Disability Services	Residence Life
Health Center	Student Life
Fitness Center	Diversity Office
- **A family member who is extremely concerned** about their student's emotional well-being may call UE Counseling Services at (812) 488-2663. One of the counselors will be happy to make an outreach contact to the student, inviting them to meet and discuss any issues of concern.
<https://www.evansville.edu/counseling/>