



COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR COLLEGE STUDENT

By CollegiateParent

One of the hardest things about sending our students off to college is the loss of daily contact.

If you and your student text or talk every day, you may not need to read any further! For the rest of us, it's normal occasionally to be anxious or sad or frustrated by the silence that can stretch between us.

"The hardest part of Dylan's first year was not knowing what he was up to," Eileen remembered. She started to relax when she realized he was figuring things out on his own. The radio silence was a mark of his growing independence.

How do you determine the right amount of contact? Beth in California said, "I don't want to hover, but I want them to know that I care about how they're doing. With two very independent sons, I initiate most of the contact."

What about when the call finally comes and the person on the other end of the phone is in tears? "The transition to college life can be challenging, bumpy and overwhelming," Sarah observed. "Because of the ease of electronic communications, you may get some frantic or upset phone calls."

Her advice: "Don't panic, don't over-advise, don't overreact. The best thing to do is listen, and if you must ask questions, make them open-ended. 'How are you going to handle that? What do you think you will do?' Sometimes they just need to vent!"

COMMUNICATION TIPS FROM EXPERIENCED COLLEGE PARENTS:

- "Set a time frame for calling them before school starts in the fall," Amy recommended.
- Remember that no news is usually good news. "When my son needed emotional support or had urgent questions, he called right away," Laura said.
- Do establish an expectation about how long they can wait before replying when something is time-sensitive or important.



Article originally published by CollegiateParent