



A SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION

By CollegiateParent

Family support is essential to a student's confidence and success. Even if you didn't go to college yourself, you've probably moved to a new place or started something new and difficult. You can use any struggles you've worked through to imagine what your student is experiencing.

Here is information that will help with a successful transition from high school to college.

FINDING MENTORS*

In high school, you and your student may have found mentors who helped with the college application process. Perhaps it was a high school teacher or counselor, or a friend, relative or co-worker.

Your student will continue to need mentors in college. This may be their academic advisor, a coach, an older student or the RA (Resident Assistant) in their residence hall if they live on campus. If your student had a special bond with a high school teacher or counselor, they should make an effort to stay in touch. These mentors may offer guidance about choosing a major and preparing for a career and can also provide moral support.

If the college has an organization or office dedicated to supporting first-generation students, encourage your student to connect with it.

BOOSTING CONFIDENCE, FACING FEARS

Here are a couple of ways to support your student, plus advice from first-generation college students in their own words.

1. Remind your student how awesome they are! Tell your student often how proud you are of them for making it this far. The determination and resilience they need to get through college will grow out of the skills that got them through high school. They belong in college as much as any other student.

"Going to college, I would just say not to be scared, because it's not as intense as you think it's going to be, and everyone here is, for the most part, a mature adult. It's a pretty friendly atmosphere."

2. Encourage your student to ask for help. Help your student understand that it's okay to be vulnerable. They should take advantage of all the campus resources that are available: tutoring, the writing center, counseling, etc.

"People are here to support you. They're not here to make you feel lesser or that you are not as smart."

"Don't be afraid to look for help and get that help, especially if you're struggling in school —[mental health issues] might be why."

"Don't be afraid, because people aren't going to ridicule you or make you feel like you're smaller than them. People are just doing their own thing, and they're friendly for the most part, and staff's here to help you, and there are so many resources. There is so much going for you to succeed."

The college journey is challenging, and there will be setbacks and disappointments along the way. You can model a positive attitude for your student. Confidence is contagious!

***MENTOR:**

Someone you trust who has the experience to help and guide you.

