



CONCORDIA
UNIVERSITY

July 2009

Seasonal Student Issues

There's a seasonal ebb and flow when it comes to student issues. Here are a few things your student may be experiencing this month:

- ▲ Feeling sad about leaving established friends and family at home
- ▲ Concern about issues of "belonging" and finding a comfortable place on campus
- ▲ Excitement coupled with anxiety about making a fresh start
- ▲ Worry about academics being "hard" and beyond their abilities
- ▲ Thinking about what type of first impression they'll make
- ▲ Concern about roommates and housing (if living on campus)
- ▲ Wondering what to pack and what to leave at home since space will be limited
- ▲ Possibly transitioning into a long-distance relationship or deciding to end a current relationship

Designing on a Dime

As your family prepares to send a student off to school, it's quite likely that money is on your mind. First it's the tuition payment. Then the insurance. A trip to campus for orientation and the big book purchase. And, of course, furnishing a living space. Sheets, school supplies, carpets, bathroom caddies, a computer...the list goes on and on. But you don't have to break the bank in order to design a comfortable living space for your student. Here are some tricks for making the process cheaper:

- Take stock of what you have on hand already. Got an extra desk lamp lying around? There's no need to buy a new one if so! Everything in your student's residence hall living space doesn't have to be brand new. In fact, it's almost better if it's not. Stuff will get banged around during the packing process anyway.
- Make sure to coordinate with your student's roommate(s). You don't want to end up with two of everything in a small living space! Plus, coordinating could help you split the cost for big ticket items.
- Visit flea markets and garage sales. This is the season for them! You can find so many great bargains—and since the vintage/retro look is "in" right now, your student will likely enjoy hunting for cool buys.
- Take advantage of 4th of July and back to school sales. There will be so many to choose from, there's no reason to buy anything at full cost!



Just the Essentials

It's so easy to purchase more than is needed. Don't get carried away. Instead, purchase just the essentials. After a few weeks, your student will have a much better idea of what she actually needs.

- Bedding
- Binders or notebooks
- Pens and pencils
- Laundry basket or bag
- Detergent
- Toiletries
- Backpack
- Raincoat
- Alarm clock
- Clothing and delicates
- Sneakers
- Towels
- Bathrobe
- Flip flops
- Plastic dishes and utensils
- Desk lamp
- Batteries
- Small vacuum
- Day planner

Focusing on one season at a time will help too. There's no need to bring or purchase heavy clothing for the winter months for September. There will be plenty of time to get this type of stuff at a later date.

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Headache Awareness: Why You & Your Student May Suffer—and What You Can Do about It

Many of us suffer from headaches, whether they're caused by stress, dehydration or other factors.

Who knew there were so many different types of headaches? Each comes with various symptoms and treatments (always check with your doctor first!), according to the National Headache Foundation (NHF). They include:

Tension-type Headaches.

These often result from temporary stress, anxiety, fatigue or anger. They begin in your forehead, temples or the back of your head and neck. You may feel a “vise-like” ache akin to a tightening band around your head, contracting head and neck muscles, a pulling feeling, soreness in your temples and pressure sensations.

“Treatment for tension-type headache may include over-the-counter or prescription medications, as well as self-help techniques such as relaxation training and biofeedback,” according to the NHF.

Cluster Headaches. These headaches, thought to be caused by chemical reactions in the brain, have

been described as the most severe and intense types. Attacks typically come in groups, with the pain arriving with little to no warning. This pain is often on one side of the head and may be accompanied by a tearing or bloodshot eye and runny nose on the “headache side” of your head.

“Treatment for cluster headache includes prescription medication and oxygen,” according to the NHF.

Sinus Headaches.

Sometimes the sinus becomes inflamed at the hands of an infection, a tumor or an allergic reaction. As a result there will be a localized pain. Headaches caused by true sinus blockages may also result in a fever.

“Treatment might include antibiotics for the infection, as well as antihistamines or decongestants,” according to the NHF.

Rebound Headaches. These are caused by taking acute headache medications more than two days per week or by taking more than the label or your doctor advises. As a result, the meds stop relieving pain

Headaches in Children

To learn more about children's headaches, head to www.headaches.org/education/Educational_Modules/Children%27s_Headaches.

and may begin to cause your headaches. Regularly overusing a medication can increase headache sufferers' potential for serious side effects.

“Consult a physician if you regularly use headache medications more than two days per week or more than the label advises,” advises the NHF.

Migraines. These are characterized by a dull ache that develops into constant, throbbing, pulsating pain felt at the temples, and the front and back of one or both sides of your head. About 15% of migraine sufferers experience an aura (wavy, jagged lines, dots, flashing lights; tunnel vision or blind spots in one or both eyes; numbness; visual or auditory hallucinations and disruptions in smell, taste or touch; difficulty recalling or speaking the correct words, or a “pins and needles” sensation) before an attack, while regular sufferers experience a combo of nausea, sensitivity to light and noise, and vomiting. Chemical reactions in the brain are thought to cause migraines.

“Treatment for migraine may include over-the-counter or prescription medications, as well as self-help techniques such as relaxation training and biofeedback,” according to the NHF.

Source: www.headaches.org

Call the Doctor

According to the National Headache Foundation, you should consult your healthcare provider if your headache...

- Is sudden and severe
- Occurs with fever, stiff neck or uncontrollable vomiting
- Causes confusion or loss of consciousness
- Is persistent, when previously you've been headache free
- Is accompanied by numbness, weakness or vision loss
- Begins after the age of 50 years
- Begins after head injury or other trauma
- Interferes with your ability to function normally at work or in social situations
- Requires medication more than two days per week



Spending Time Together

We know that you know how to have fun as a family. But in the craziness of busy work and social schedules, the summer weeks can quickly pass by. Before you know it, it will be time to pack up and send your student off to college.

Carve out some time now to spend quality time together. It doesn't have to be anything fancy—or expensive. A night spent on your back porch talking and watching fireflies will do. And so will a day trip to a local state park. Just pick a few things that you think you will all enjoy and have some family fun! Here are some ideas to get you started:

- **Volunteer at a local shelter for a morning.** A soup kitchen, an animal adoption center, whatever! You'll feel good about helping—and your family will learn something too.
- **Make ice cream sodas,** serve them up in cool glasses, and then take a walk together.
- **Pick a book and read it together.** Carve out time weekly to have “book chats” over coffee—or another fun treat—and learn from one another. The book doesn't have to be a classic. Read or re-read the Harry Potter series to get ready for the new movie opening in July!
- **Attend a local Fourth of July parade together,** followed by a lunch pic-

nic or BBQ at a local park, and s'mores after dinner.

- **Go to the beach for the day.** Load up the car with Frisbees, buckets and shovels, and other sun fun. Don't forget the sunscreen!
- **Attend a community festival or event.** There is always so much happening. Take advantage of a local fun stop and support local businesses too.
- **Visit a local historical site.** You can even pick one your youngest has visited on a school trip—she's sure to appreciate being the “expert” for the day!
- **Cook a meal together.** Make it Sunday brunch or an evening dinner—or have breakfast food for dinner! It doesn't matter. The time together is what counts.
- **Pick a craft project to work on throughout the summer.** Maybe you want to make a quilt together for your student's bed or a scrapbook for an elder in a nursing home. Or make it something simple like decorating travel mugs to put away as holiday gifts.
- **Head to a local park with your dogs.** Spend some time throwing a ball or Frisbee, lounging all together, exploring and more.

Here's to simple, meaningful family fun!

“Cell Phone Elbow” Warrants Conversation

Doctors have a new name for overextending the ulnar nerves in your arm—cell phone elbow. According to CNN (6/2/09), orthopedic specialists are reporting cases of “cell phone elbow,” in which patients damage an essential nerve in their arm by bending their elbows too tightly for too long. This causes the pinkie and ring fingers to tingle or feel numb.



People who have this condition, called cubital tunnel syndrome, can feel weakness in their hands. They may have trouble completing tasks such as opening jars or playing musical instruments.

Doctors recommend that cell phone users who start to feel a tingle or numbing in their fingers switch hands, before it gets worse. “It could impede your typing ability, your writing ability,” Dr. Peter J. Evans, the director of the Hand and Upper Extremity Center at the Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland, Ohio, said. He added, “People get very unintelligible writing if it gets severe.”

Although most cases of cubital tunnel syndrome require simple behavioral changes, severe cases of cubital tunnel syndrome do require surgery. Doctors are not suggesting that using a cell phone is dangerous, but they are advocating that cell phone users maintain common sense. Encourage your student not to talk on a cell phone for hours if he feels numbing in his fingers.

Designing on a Dime

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- **Avoid buying a lot of things in bulk.** Finding space to store it will be tough and it might end up being more than is needed anyway.
- **Talk with other college students.** Find out from them what they took to school that wasn't needed. You can definitely learn from others' mistakes, and then pass on your newfound knowledge to others.
- **Take just the essentials with plans to purchase additional items after your**

student has settled in for some time. Of course your student will want to have everything he needs from the get go. But sometimes it's best to wait it out until after he gets into a groove.

If all of the reality TV home improvement shows can “design on a dime,” why can't you? With some thought and planning, we think you can save lots of money—and still design a living space that your student will enjoy and be proud of.



Tricky Transitions

With so much focus on your college student, it can be easy to forget about the impact that her leaving can have on younger siblings. Sibling relationships can be enduring, and a sense of loss can be felt in a number of ways when an older sibling heads off to college.

- **Take the time to talk with younger siblings.** Ask them how they are feeling about the upcoming transition and explain

some of the ways things might change at home. Consider discussing...

How family dynamics might change

How resources such as transportation and bedroom space may need to be reallocated appropriately among those still at home

How the cost of sending a student to college may change your family's finan-

cial situation and that might impact day-to-day functioning

- **Be careful not to send a "guilt trip."** Consider...
Allowing connections among older and younger siblings to happen naturally, rather than forcing them to spend time together. This will lead to a long-term renewed relationship, rather than resentment. Not making your college student feel guilty about wanting to spend time with friends and to do the things he enjoys before leaving home. Bringing some closure to these aspects of his life is really important too.

- **Involve younger siblings in planning and preparation for your college student's departure.** Consider asking younger siblings to...

Help in picking out items for a residence hall room.

Put important college dates on their calendar, such as family weekend, homecoming and more.

Come with the family to any campus visits that are taken.

You know your family best, so you'll know what the best way is to involve everyone in the upcoming transition. Working together during this tricky transition will build lasting memories and could help make the process go smoother too.

Staying Connected with the College Sibling

Whether a sibling is feeling lonely or confused about their new perceived role in the family, there are a variety of ways that parents can help those children still at home stay connected with an older sibling at college.

Plan family gatherings

- Plan a dinner out for just family when the college student comes home to visit.
- Explore a new city by meeting halfway between home and college for a day.
- Have the younger sibling(s) and college sibling(s) collaboratively plan a family weekend getaway.

Virtual connection

- Plan weekly phone calls for younger siblings to talk with their older sibling.
- Provide access to email for siblings back home.
- Help a sibling prepare a college care package.
- Snail mail is always fun to get, so encourage siblings to write each other regularly.

Plan a campus visit

- Family Weekend
- Sibling Weekend
- Homecoming
- Athletic Events

