



June 2008

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:

- ▲ Missing friends at school and feeling like it'll be a long time until they see them again
- ▲ Transitioning back to life at home after being away all year (for students who go away to school)
- ▲ Adjusting to a new routine
- ▲ Working full-time instead of going to school full-time
- ▲ Anxiety about academics—feeling like they have a lot of ground to make up if they did poorly last semester
- ▲ Reestablishing relationships with siblings, parents and friends
- ▲ Budgeting their money and saving for fall

Social Host Liability Laws

The impact of hosting underage drinking events

Summertime often sets the scene for celebrations, some of which include alcohol. It's a good time to be aware of social host liability laws, which Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) describe as "laws



that hold individuals responsible for underage drinking events on property they own, lease, or otherwise control." Those responsible can be parents, landowners and tenants. MADD goes on to say that, "Unlike laws that prohibit furnishing alcohol to youth under 21, social host laws focus on preventing underage drinking on private property without regard to who furnishes the alcohol. Their focus is on the venues in which underage drinking takes place rather than on the furnishing of the alcohol."

Social host liability can apply in situations when underage drinking occurs at your house, even if you aren't home. If someone is injured at a party hosted at your home, these laws

can kick in, too. Older siblings or relatives need to be aware of these dangers as well so they can make smart choices.

Unlawful social hosting is a crime in 24 states and can result in civil lawsuits against hosts in 33 states.

Violations may result in civil or criminal fines, prison terms and monetary damage awards, depending on the jurisdiction.

So, during this time of life when your student is still living with you, either full- or part-time, keep social host liability issues in mind. Let your student know what the consequences to *you* could be, should he decide to host a party at your house while you are gone. And think carefully about allowing underage drinking at your home. The outcome could be dangerous—and potentially lead to legal troubles—for those involved.

Source: MADD, www.madd.org/Professionals/Social-Host/Social-Host-Liability.aspx

Social Host Laws in Your Neighborhood

To search specific social host laws in your area, go to www3.madd.org/socialhost/index.aspx.

Summer Savings

Helping students maximize their earnings

Many students will be working to make—and save—money this summer so they can use it to pay for school costs. The idea is to get ahead so that they have money for textbooks and tuition, living expenses and laundry. Yet the temptation to earn and spend during the summer months can be strong for some students, especially if they aren't the wisest money managers.



Here are some strategies you can share with them to help them maximize their summer money:

- **Set a weekly budget and stick to it.** Only take out a certain amount from the bank and/or ATM at the same time each week. This ritual may help you better recognize when you're going overboard and hitting the ATM—and going over budget—at other times throughout the week.
- **Don't rely on plastic.** If you have a habit of putting things on your credit card, simplify for the summer.
- **Keep costs to a minimum.** Carpool to work to save on gas costs or take public transportation. Perhaps you can still go out to dinner with friends but cut out \$2 by not ordering a beverage. Try thinking of other simple cost-cutting measures that can really add up!

- **Set a savings goal.** After the first month of summer, revisit your summer savings goal and see what kind of progress is being made. Are you on target?

Behind? Ahead? Check in on your goal every other week or so. This will allow you to be completely conscious of your money—even that which is squirreled away in savings.

Students *can* have fun and save money too. It just takes some smart planning, creative thinking and a bit of discipline. You can help them get on a healthy financial path.

Cost-Cutting Ideas

Here are some simple, yet effective ideas to share with your student:

- ✂ **Skip the beverage, dessert and that shared appetizer to save money when having dinner with friends**
- ✂ **Go to the less expensive matinee**
- ✂ **Check out the Friday paper for free or low-cost fun during the weekend (festivals, concerts in the park, etc.)**
- ✂ **When road tripping with friends, consider camping—it's good fun and costs less than paying for a hotel room**
- ✂ **Volunteer at an event—chances are you can get in for free while also lending a hand!**

Interesting Topics for Summer Conversation

Here are some ways to connect with your student—through good, meaningful conversation!

- ❖ what classes your student is most looking forward to next term—and why
- ❖ how he's thinking about arranging his living space to make it more fun and effective
- ❖ the thing(s) she's glad she got involved in this year—and why
- ❖ goals for next term, from applying for a campus job to an academic goal to trying out for a leadership position
- ❖ ways you can both be more environmentally conscious
- ❖ what classes you'd like to take if you were in college—and why
- ❖ the faculty or staff member your student was most inspired by—and why
- ❖ how his friends are spending the summer
- ❖ what she'd suggest to family or friends going to college, now that she has some experience under her belt
- ❖ places around school that he'd like to explore, from apple orchards to hiking trails
- ❖ what he's really looking forward to in the coming year



10 Ways to Make the Most of Orientation

When you have the opportunity to go through a parent orientation program, there are some key ways to make the most of this gateway experience:

Prepare Questions. Think about what you really *want* to know, not just what

you “should” find out. Interested in how students can apply their

learning in practical settings? Ask about internships, jobs and co-op opportunities. Want to know whom your student can turn to if he’s having learning difficulties? Ask the question. Thinking ahead will help you determine what’s truly important to you and your student.

Don’t be Shy. Sitting back and listening to presenters and panels makes good sense. However, if you have additional questions, don’t hesitate to ask. Whether it’s in a group setting or one-on-one after a presentation, your concerns deserve

There is no such thing as a dumb question!

Questions to Consider

Commuter Concerns. What meal plans are available for commuters? How can they get involved in campus life, even though they don’t live there? What is the parking situation like?

Residence Hall Life. What are students allowed to bring and what is against policy? Do the mattresses require extra long sheets? What staff members are available in the halls?

Academics. What services are available to students with learning disabilities? How do professors’ office hours work? If a student is feeling behind, what can he/she do?

This is just the tip of the iceberg. Determine what is important to YOU.

attention. And no question is a “dumb” one!

Listen and Take Notes. Jot some notes as various presenters offer you information. That way, you can read through them when you get home and clear your head. It’s easy to say, “I’ll remember that point or that contact info” yet the sheer volume of information you are offered during orientation makes remembering everything very difficult.

Get to Know Other Parents/Family Members. Orientation is an excellent time to mix and mingle with others who are going through the same thing that you are: sending your student to college. Develop informal support structures and compare notes with other parents and family members.

Give Your Student Some Space. This is his first campus experience as a matriculated student so it’s important that he learn to navigate on his own. Give him space to meet people, to ask his own questions and to take charge of his college life. Starting off with a dose of self-responsibility during orientation will set a positive tone for the rest of his time on campus.

Take Tours. It may be hot and you may be tired. Yet nothing beats seeing something with your own eyes. So, consider taking tours that are offered. You’ll get to see academic buildings, residence halls, community spaces and much more. Then, when your student starts talking about these places during the semester, you’ll be able to accurately picture her in her surroundings.

An Orientation Checklist

To bring ...

- A list of questions
- Water bottle and snacks
- Any important documents you may need

To try to get ...

- List of important numbers
- Course Catalog
- Parent Association Information
- Answers to questions

Keep Yourself Healthy.

Orientation sessions often happen on some of the hottest days of the year. Drink water, stay cool and pace yourself.

Don’t Cause a Scene. We all know how to handle concerns with care and dignity. Make that your mode of operation so that people will respond to you better and so that your student doesn’t have to be embarrassed.

Have Paperwork in Place.

Work with your student to make sure that you’re bringing all the required paperwork to campus for orientation. Go through a checklist ahead of time so that you both feel prepared to dive into orientation without worry!

Join the Parent

Association. Why not? These organizations typically do everything from keeping families informed to planning Parent/Family Weekend events—and much more. Plus, they offer another connection to campus that can be invaluable when you have questions, concerns and ideas.

Orientation can be an exciting time for both you and your student. Make the most of it!



Telling Life Stories via StoryCorps

The StoryCorps storytelling initiative has already been experienced by tens of thousands of people, as they work with a partner to record and preserve their life stories. It's part of the tradition of oral histories—asking questions of a relative or friend and recording these memories so they can be preserved for generations.

Summer might be a good time for your student to talk with a favorite aunt or grandparent as a way to capture their oral history. Or maybe you and your student can share this meaningful experience. The StoryCorps website at www.storycorps.net shares details about how to embark on this process, from questions to ask to StoryBooth and MobileBooth locations available throughout the summer where you can record your story.

Through this initiative, participants receive a CD recording of their

interview and then another copy is archived at the Library of Congress. Sometimes, National Public Radio will air a story, with permission.

Oral histories capture our stories and provide structured opportunities for loved ones to share interesting, sometimes hidden information. StoryCorps makes the process easier... consider giving it a try!

Questions List
Find a series of potential questions you can ask about anything from war to relationships to family—and everything in between—at www.storycorps.net/record-your-story/question-generator/list.

Summer Reads

- ◆ *The Last Lecture* by Randy Pausch and Jeffrey Zaslow
How would you document all you've learned and experienced in your lifetime if you found out you only had a limited amount of time to live?
- ◆ *Assassination Vacation* by Sarah Vowell
History, humor and vacation all mixed in one, as you visit the sites associated with presidential assassinations.
- ◆ *Change of Heart* by Jodi Picoult
Explore family dynamics... and a difficult struggle involving redemption and coming to terms with the past.
- ◆ *The End of Nature* by Bill McKibben
What is nature and how has humanity impacted its beauty and wonder?
- ◆ *The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream* by Barack Obama, *Hard Call: The Art of Great Decisions* by John McCain and Mark Salter, and *A Woman in Charge: The Life of Hillary Rodham Clinton* by Carl Bernstein
Learn more about the 2008 presidential candidates so you can make an informed choice this fall.
Consider reading any of these books this summer by yourself—or with friends or family for some interesting discussions.



5 Ways to Connect with Your Student This Summer

Whether you're in the same place or living apart, there are some simple ways to stay connected with your student...

1. Suggest that you both read the same book so you can discuss it.
2. Go to a movie that your student has seen so you can compare notes.
3. Meet halfway to spend some time together, whether it's for lunch, a hike or a chat.
4. Swap photos of your individual summer adventures—a picture often speaks volumes!
5. Volunteer together for a worthy cause, whether it's distributing water at a local 5K run or helping in a community garden.

