

Welcome Parents!

Your son or daughter's college experience will likely signal a change for you as parents and other members of your family as well. It is our hope that some of the following information will help you navigate this time of change and challenge as well as help you support your student here at Stetson University.

What your son or daughter may experience: College will likely be a time of exploration and change for them. They may forge new identities, seek increased autonomy, and begin exploring new friendships and values. They may reevaluate tentative career goals, and change those goals and their majors. Some of this exploration may challenge you and values that you hold dear. Each one of these young people will go through this process in their own unique way, just as every parent will have different expectations of, and reactions to, their son or daughter's college experience.

What parents may experience: Happiness, pride, anxiety, sadness, and a sense of loss may all be a part of your response to this time of change. As children grow into young adults you may worry about their safety, ability to care for themselves, and capacity to make healthy choices. At times you may also feel that your son or daughter's performance is a reflection on you as a parent. There's a lot going on for you!

How you can support your student:

- **Balance** maintaining a sense of connectedness to him or her along with respect for their growing independence. Try to let them take the lead. Determine *with them* how much contact with them is appropriate. (The cell phone has been described as the "world's longest umbilical cord" and may be more of a problem than an asset in setting good boundaries.)
- Be **realistic and specific** about financial issues including what you will pay for and what they will be responsible for. Also be realistic about their academic performance. The challenges here are much different than they were offered in high school.
- **Know the resources** in the campus community. Stetson University has a wide variety of offices and programs here to provide support for all of our students. In Campus Life there are dedicated, compassionate people here to help both your sons and daughters and you as well.

How can the University Counseling Center help parents? - We are available for consultation with parents by phone or by appointment here in our offices. If you have concerns about your son or daughter please feel free to contact us. We may be able to provide support for you, your student, or referral information to offices that may be more appropriate for a given problem.

What about confidentiality? - Confidentiality is an important part of establishing a trusting and effective counseling relationship. Ethical and legal considerations prohibit us from sharing any information about a student's counseling contacts without their written consent.

Setting up an appointment for your son or daughter: It is our policy that we do not make contact with students who may have been identified by you or anyone in the campus community who may be seen as in need of support. It is important that they set and commit to an appointment.