

What Can I Do to Help My Child from a Distance?

Of course, you are still a parent to your almost-adult, and he or she does still need your support and guidance during the college years. Here are some ways you can express your caring and enhance your child's experience at Stetson.

1. **Stay in touch!**

Even though your child is experimenting with independent choices, he or she still needs to know that you're there and are available to talk over both normal events and difficult issues. Make arrangements to write or call your child on a regular basis.

2. **Allow space** for your child to set the agenda for some of your conversations.

If he or she needs help or support, the subject is more likely to come up if you aren't inquiring pointedly about what time he or she came in last night!

3. **Be realistic with your college student** about financial matters.

Most students come to school with a fairly detailed plan about how tuition, fees, books, and room and board will be paid for, and what the family's expectations are about spending money. Being specific at the outset may help avoid misunderstandings later. Students can tend to spend a fair amount for their social interactions. It may behoove your family to be aware of how much your child is spending, to set reasonable limits, and to monitor any credit card usage so that large debts are not incurred.

4. Be realistic as well about academic achievement and grades.

The College attracts bright students from all over the world, and not every freshman who excelled academically in high school will be an all-A student here. Developing or refining the capacity to work independently and consistently and to demonstrate mastery can be more important than grades, as long as the student meets the basic academic requirements set out by the College. Again, these are choices that each individual student makes, though certainly it is appropriate to help your child set his or her own long-term goals.

5. If your child does experience difficulties at Stetson, encourage him or her to take advantage of the wealth of resources available for students.

For academic issues, talking with the professor or academic advisor is probably the first step, but the Academic Resources Office, the Counseling Center, and the Career Services Office are also available to help. The Office of First Year Studies can assist with a variety of concerns. If your son or daughter could benefit from counseling, the Counseling Center is available on campus. You can help your child by reminding him or her of the many resources available on the Stetson University campus.