

CAPITOL COLLEGE

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March 2010

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:

- ▲ Low energy levels and restlessness
- ▲ Mid-semester slump and sickness
- ▲ Making plans for next year—housing, classes and financial aid
- ▲ Hidden conflicts between roommates and friends begin to arise
- ▲ Drug and alcohol use may increase
- ▲ Mid-term anxiety
- ▲ Seniors thinking about graduation
- ▲ Excitement or depression about Spring Break plans
- ▲ Pledging begins for Greek organizations
- ▲ Changing or deciding on a major

Communicating Effectively with Your Student

Communication comes in an array of forms these days: Tweets, Facebook posts, texts, IMs, emails, Skype and cell phone calls. Sometimes you'll learn about something first-hand, as your student calls you on the way to class. Other times, you may find out something via Facebook. Whatever the case may be, learning to communicate effectively with your student via all these forums—and more—can be done.

Some of the rules cut across the board, as you listen and respond in supportive, open ways...

Be Encouraging

- Try to convey interest, no matter how simple or mundane the topic is. If your student contacted you, she wants to connect!
- Try not to agree or disagree with what is being shared. Use neutral words.
- Be patient and try not to interrupt, whether it's with your voice or your typed words.
- Ask open-ended questions such as, "Can you tell me more...?"
- If you're chatting on IM or texting, let your student know that you're available for a phone call, if he'd like to talk more.

Show You're Listening

- Make reflective statements such as, "So, it's sounding like you really want that job..." to show that you understand what's going on with her.
- Concentrate on "hidden" emotional meanings. What are the real feelings behind the words? If you're on the phone or Skype with your student, what is his tone of voice telling you?
- Don't assume to understand—pure listening is often much more important to your student than hearing, "Oh, I know exactly what you mean."

Summarize the Key Points

- Restate the major ideas expressed, including feelings, to help your student establish an action plan.
- Help your student sort out the important aspects of the conversation from the tangents and turns, without diminishing his feelings.
- Make statements such as, "These seem to be the key thoughts/feelings you expressed... did I miss anything?"

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Communicating with Your Student

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Validate Thoughts & Feelings

- Acknowledge the value of your student's feelings.
- Try to keep your own emotions from interfering with your ability to listen openly. You don't have to agree in order to be a good listener.
- Express appreciation for your student's efforts and actions, even if they seem minimal. This will remind your student that

she has a cheering section—even if it's located far away!

- Make statements such as, "I'm happy you decided to discuss this with me..."

While communication methods have expanded to gadgets galore, students' needs are relatively similar to what they've always been: they need to be listened to, supported, challenged and validated. Step right up!

On the Phone

Here are five suggestions for parents and families—from college students themselves:

5. **Focus 100% attention on the phone call.** If you can't at the time of the call, tell us so we can call back. Then, neither person needs to deal with interruptions or distractions.
4. **Ask questions that express genuine interest,** even if you don't always understand what we are talking about.
3. **Don't pressure us about grades and school work,** and instead ask us about what we are learning in and enjoying about our classes. Then, we can engage on an intellectual level without worrying that all you care about is our GPA.
2. **Ask us about our relationships with friends, faculty members and administrators — but without prying.** Talk with us about our social life and use these conversations to gauge how we are doing emotionally. Our ability to maintain and nurture quality relationships on campus directly relates to our comfort level and happiness.
1. **Keep in mind that even though we are growing more independent of you, it's interdependence we ultimately seek.** The college years are the time when we can begin having more mature conversations with you. Keep an open mind and remember that we make our own decisions on a daily basis. However, we still call home for guidance, reassurance and support.

Attention Parents of Returning Students:

Just a friendly reminder that financial aid forms need to be filed this semester. For specific deadlines, please check with the financial aid office. Here are some useful financial aid websites:

Free Application for Federal Student Aid • www.fafsa.ed.gov
College Board: Connect to College Success • www.collegeboard.org
The Financial Aid Information Page • www.finaid.org
Scholarship Search • www.fastweb.com

Getting a Summer Job

It's time for your student to start looking for a



summer job, if that's in her plans for the upcoming months. Given the current state of the economy, this might not be easy. Here are a few websites that can help:

- ▲ www.collegehelpers.com/—CollegeHelpers.com specializes in providing part-time off-campus job postings for college students.
- ▲ www.summerjobs.com/—This website includes seasonal employment with resorts, camps, parks, hotels and more.
- ▲ www.careerbuilder.com/—Career Builder offers a host of services, including a listing of part-time jobs by category and city.
- ▲ www.summerjobfinder.com/student-employment.php—Summer Job Finder posts jobs and internships available to college students.
- ▲ www.summercampstaff.com/—Search for summer camp jobs with this comprehensive summer camp directory.

You can also encourage your student to visit the Career Center on campus for more summer job resources, both on campus and beyond.

What is Adult ADD?

Recognizing Adult Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)

According to the Adult ADD Center, “Adult ADD is a neurological brain disorder that manifests as a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity/impulsivity that is more frequent and severe than is typically observed in individuals at a comparable level of development.” Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), which begins in childhood, can also persist into adulthood. In fact, about 60% of individuals diagnosed with ADHD as children continue to have symptoms as adults. Generally, their level of hyperactivity diminishes as they get older.

The exact cause of Adult ADD remains unknown, but a great deal of research has been conducted over the past 10 years. Many believe genetics play a role, but other causes have been explored as well.

Could your student have Adult ADD?

If you are concerned about your student, encourage him/her to make an appointment with a healthcare professional. Untreated, ADD can impact many aspects of life. An adult with untreated ADD compared with an adult without ADD is more likely to be fired from a job, to get divorced or separated, and to have a suspended driver’s license.

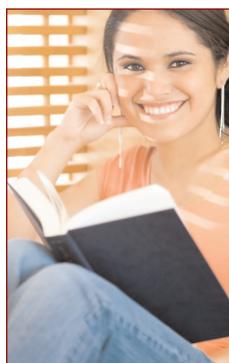
How is Adult ADD diagnosed?

Healthcare professionals diagnose Adult ADD based on the answers to three questions:

- What are the symptoms?
- What are the impairments?
- What is the history of the symptoms?

Adults with ADD might experience symptoms such as lack of focus, disorganization, restlessness, difficulty finishing projects and/or losing things.

They often have difficulty managing time and feel misunderstood because others do not understand their thought



process. These symptoms can impair their level of success at work, home or in personal relationships. In order to be diagnosed with Adult ADD, individuals generally must have had their symptoms prior to age 7 and for at least six months.

What can my student do to successfully manage his/her Adult ADD?

The most common treatment options for Adult ADD are medication and behavior modification. Many professionals, such as counselors and life coaches, can help individuals manage their life successfully by helping them develop strong organization and social skills.

Here are some tips you can offer your student for managing his/her life:

- Use time management techniques, such as making lists or using a planner, to help stick to routines and schedules.

- Take note of how long daily/weekly activities take to complete (such as doing laundry or getting ready in the morning). Plan for that amount of time in your schedule the next time you need to complete the task.
- Plan for the unexpected. A teacher asks to talk with you after class? A friend in crisis needs to meet for coffee? Not a problem. Build extra time into your schedule for these types of occurrences.
- Set short-term, attainable goals and create a step-by-step plan to achieve them. This will help you stay interested and motivated to accomplish them.
- If you are comfortable, talk with your roommate and friends about your disorder. They will be more likely to understand your forgetfulness, impatience and angry outbursts, and be willing to help you strategize ways to improve.
- Try to find a quiet place to work on assignments that require a lot of concentration. This will help you stay focused.
- Organize your study space so that you are less likely to experience distraction. For example, position your chair or desk so you can’t see into the hallway or choose a study carrel that faces a wall, rather than others studying or walking by.
- When working on assignments for a long period of time, take periodic breaks. Move around...instead of texting your friend down the hall to ask what time she is going to the dining hall, go ask her in person.

Source: www.adhd.com/adults/adults.jsp



Help Your Student Get Quality Sleep

Many college students underestimate the need for a good night's sleep. Due to the stresses of classes and jobs, the independence of living away from home and a very active social scene that can be found on almost every campus, it is very easy to fall into a pattern of poor sleeping habits. Unfortunately, not getting enough sleep is more harmful than students might think.



Here are a few suggestions from the experts that you can share with

your student to help him improve the quality of his sleep.

- Try to go to bed at the same time every night.
- Don't make your bed a key study space.
- Realize that alcohol does not help people sleep.
- Avoid watching the clock.
- Establish a relaxing routine (taking a bath, listening to music) to do about a half hour before bed.
- Consider using "white noise" to help you fall asleep (like a fan).
- Try to make your bed as comfortable as possible.
- Finish eating about two hours before bed.

- Avoid exercise right before bed—a workout in late afternoon is ideal, because it gives your body adequate time to cool down (and a dropping body temperature is what the brain associates with sleep).
- Here's wishing your student a good night's sleep.

Sources: The Centers for Disease Control; www.sleepfoundation.org; www.sleep-deprivation.com

National Sleep Awareness Week is March 7 – 13. Find more info at www.sleepfoundation.org.

Keeping Up with Names in the News

Keeping up with names in the news can be an overwhelming task at times. However, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has made it a bit easier by publishing and regularly updating an online directory of world leaders that can be used as a reference aid. It can be tough for college students to stay abreast of the news, but this resource can help. Here is a sampling to kick-start your student's world leaders learning curve:

Canada's Prime Minister is Stephen Harper and Governor General is Michaëlle Jean

Costa Rica's President is Oscar Arias Sanchez

The Philippines' President is Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

South Korea's President is Lee Myung-bak and Prime Minister is Chung Un-chan

Hungary's President is Laszlo Solyom and Prime Minister is Gordon Bajnai

Iran's Supreme Leader is Ayatollah Ali Hoseini-Khamenei and President is Mahmud Ahmadi-Nejad

The United Kingdom's Queen is Elizabeth II and Prime Minister is Gordon Brown

Germany's President is Horst Koehler and Chancellor is Angela Merkel

Mexico's President is Felipe de Jesus Calderon Hinojosa

South Africa's President is Jacob Zuma

Consider sharing the website with your student to help him increase his world leader literacy.

Source: www.cia.gov/library/publications/world-leaders-1/index.html

Turning Cabin Fever into Spring Fervor!

Is your student feeling down in the dumps? Mid-winter blahs. Cabin fever. Lack of motivation. Here are some ideas you can share with your student for turning cabin fever into spring fervor. Suggest they ...

- ▲ Put fresh flowers or candy in the common area bathroom
- ▲ Finger paint with their hands and feet
- ▲ Reenact popular movie scenes and post the videos on YouTube
- ▲ Post inspirational thoughts all over their room
- ▲ Have a popcorn party and create fun concoctions
- ▲ Play Frisbee in the snow
- ▲ Do a service project outside like raking leaves, shoveling snow, mowing lawns or cleaning out gutters