



# KNOWN STRESSORS FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

*What sort of stresses do college students endure when going to college? When talking with your child about common college stressors, be sure to cover all the bases below on what could potentially stress them out, and what they can do to help themselves*

## **LOSS OF PREVIOUS SUPPORT SYSTEM AND SOCIAL NETWORK**

*Especially in kids that go away to school, their family and friends are suddenly not around, and that can be scary. Discuss ways to keep in contact with your children and their friends while they're away.*

## **FEELINGS OF ISOLATION**

*Being away from everyone and everything you know and love can be tough. Making new friends that you trust can seem even harder. Sometimes kids retreat into their own shell as a result. Discuss ways to help your child not isolate themselves.*

## **ACADEMIC STRESS**

*School can suddenly seem a lot harder than it was in high school, or completely different. Prepare them by discussing with them how best to handle their new course load.*

## **INCREASED PRESSURE TO SUCCEED**

*With college is college debt stress. Knowing there's a dollar amount attached to the curriculum that wasn't there before, some children don't want to waste their's or their parent's money by doing poorly. My motto with my children is to always do their best, and they will never fail, even if the grade isn't what they hoped for. Effort for me is what I'm truly after. Sometimes courses aren't the best fit? Sometimes a professor can seem pretty harsh, but there's a more gentler one they can switch to. Talk to your kids about how best tackle their new (and harder) college work.*

## **MENTAL ILLNESS, ESPECIALLY ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION**

*If your child already has mental illness, anxiety, or depression, this drastic life change can seem an awful lot harder than it is for those without mental issues. Ensure your child is set up with a new local doctor if they're away, with check-ins with their regular family doctor, too. And ensure they have the numbers on hand to get help if they are experiencing a crisis.*

## **LACK OF ADEQUATE COPING SKILLS**

*If your child doesn't have a way to release stress and cope in a healthy way when things get tough, it can pile on them and overwhelm them. Discuss ways to destress in a healthy way while they're away at school (exercise, meditation, deep breathing).*

## **FEAR OF MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA**

*This is a big one, because it shouldn't be a big deal at all. Reinforce this belief with your child/ren that everyone's mental health is important and if anyone needs help, it doesn't make them weak. Everyone in some form has leaned on a friend, relative, etc for help in a time of need.*

## **INSOMNIA**

*Not only is stress a cause of lack of sleep, but having a lack of good quality sleep can cause stress where there doesn't need to be. It's hard to ensure your child is getting enough sleep when they're away from college and on their own, so discuss a plan of attack with your child on how they can sleep well and comfortably to prevent sleep from further exacerbating any stress they are enduring by being away.*