

Keep Calm and Parent On

Tips for Soon-to-Be College Parents

Tip 1: Ready, Set, Breathe

First time sending a kid to college? Or practically a pro by now? Each time brings its own challenges, but here's what we know for sure: You've both got this. So, take a deep breath and get ready to enjoy the journey together.

Tip 2: Be the Sidekick, Not the Superhero

Work together to create a list of the must-dos—finding the right schools, getting recommendations, writing application essays—but your student should be the one checking the boxes. .

Tip 3: Start With the Big Picture

What kind of school feels right? How close to home? What's within your family's budget? Get on the same page about what you—and your student—are looking for.

Tip 4: List Your Need-to-Knows

How will we pay for college? Will my student get academic accommodations? How closely should I be involved once they get there? Make a list of your questions and start your research.

Tip 5: Plan for Deadlines

Put the big deadlines for junior and senior year on a calendar: writing essays, sending applications, submitting the FAFSA, etc. Mapping the whole race in advance is how you'll get to the finish line.

Tip 6: Be the Editor

Let your student take the lead on essays, but be ready to proofread if asked. Same goes for resumes. Even though they're becoming adults, they still need your advice.

Tip 7: Show Them What's Available

Schools offer plenty of resources for students, from academic help to emotional support to campus transportation. Your role? Help them know these resources exist.

Tip 8: Stay Connected

Applying for college is stressful, and your student needs your support. Check in with them often and listen—especially when it's time to make the final decision.

Tip 9: Transition to Independence

There's a lot to balance as a young adult at college: new friends, grades, roommates, extracurricular activities, and trips home. Help them set priorities to keep it all in balance, and be patient when things don't go perfectly.

Tip 10: Honor the Journey

Once your student makes their choice, it's time to celebrate! Applying for colleges requires work from everyone, and this is a big milestone for your whole family. Take a moment to enjoy it and honor your student's success.