

# **BARTON**

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

*A New Chapter*



*How Parents Fit Into Their  
Students' Lives At College*

# *A New Chapter....*

You've been through quite a few life chapters with your son or daughter so far. From the first steps to first loves, no one knows those experiences quite like you.

However, it's time to flip the page and embark upon a brand new chapter...the college years.

## TRANSITION TIME

Transitions can be tough. Whether your child is leaving for school or living at home while attending classes, it's an adjustment for everyone involved.

Emotions are bound to be mixed. For many parents, the "I want them to stay forever young" feelings often do battle with the "Yes, they really need to grow up and go to school now" thoughts. That's completely natural. This person, whether they're an angel or a challenge, is part of your life. And that doesn't have to change.

What will change is the frequency of your communication and the nature of that communication. You won't be able to see every part of your student's life. You'll need to trust their instincts and the positive values you instilled in them. This trust is key to making the college transition work for both of you.

A student who feels trusted by his parents:

- Has more self-confidence
- Can stand up for what he believes
- Knows he has support back home
- **Is better able to say "No" when the situation warrants**

A student who feels mistrusted by their parents:

- **May defy authority because it's expected of them**
- **Won't communicate about what's happening at college**
- Will look to others, some who will be good influences and others who **won't be to fill that void**
- Will keep secrets that could be harmful

**Okay, there's all this talk about change. So, what stays the same?**

Your student:  
Needs you  
Loves you  
Respects your opinion  
Is operating based on the values you instilled.



## *An Evolving*

### *Relationship....*

Just because students head to **college, it doesn't mean that they are** leaving you behind. They still need you and your wisdom, your counsel, and your love. They just need you in different ways now. For instance:

**They need you to let go. It's difficult** for a student to start making their own **life at college if their "old life" keeps** pulling them back. So, let go to the extent that your conversations contain a **balanced mixture of what's happening on campus and what's happening at** home. And try not to do everything for your student either — the experience of figuring things out on their own can be a real strength builder.

They need to be able to make mistakes. Part of exploring this newfound sense of independence involves the inevitable making of mistakes. A student who is terrified of **"screwing up" in their parent's eyes may** not take positive risks such as tackling a new subject or trying out for a play. Students need support as they take risks. And risks most often lead to growth.

They need to know that you believe in them. As your student tries new things, expands their worldview and questions assumptions, their perspective may change. Successful students are able to experiment like this because, at the root of it all they know that someone back home believes in them.

## *BOOK MARK*

### *Interested Not Intrusive*

Just because your student is at **school, it doesn't mean that they no** longer need you to be involved in **their life. It's important for you to be** involved — **it's actually quite an** essential for their success!

**The key is being interested in what's** happening in their life with out being too intrusive.

Some ways to do just that are:



**Don't make conversations feel like "quizzes"**



Instead of always focusing on grades, ask your student what he is learning in class—that takes the pressure off and allows him to share exciting information.



If your student mentions a **new person's name, just** casually ask about that person **(So, Sam is a friend from ...?)** rather than drilling for details.



**Don't always ask where they were if they weren't in when** you called.



**Ask what they're getting** involved in and what interests them so far.



Let them share their enthusiasm

# ***We Treat Them As Adults.....***

One of the best ways to support your student is by understanding the college's role in their life. We are not here to take over the parenting role—that is solely up to you. We are here, however, to help your student develop into a responsible, healthy adult.

## STUDENT SERVICES

What is “student services” about? In a nutshell:

- We provide opportunities for students to achieve competence in academic and non-academic arenas.
- We challenge them while also providing support
- We teach them how to manage emotions, from anger to self-esteem and everything in between
- We help them become autonomous so that they are no longer dependent by, rather, interdependent, on others.
- We encourage them to determine who they really are on many levels.
- We support the development of positive relationships, including those with friends, partners and diverse individuals.
- We help students identify and pursue their purpose
- We offer assistance as they develop their values and figure out what they stand for.

Many members of the campus community are involved in the student services process on a daily basis. They include:

- Faculty members
- Child Development Center
- Financial Aid
- Admissions—Enrollment Services
- Student Support Services—Tutoring
- Student Life—Campus Nurse—Housing
- Career Services—Advising—Testing
- Campus Counselor

## BOOK MARK

### *The Campus Approach*



We make ourselves very available to students, during **“office hours” and evening hours**



We welcome students coming to us with a problem



We treat students as adults, getting them involved in solving their own problems instead of relying upon others to do it for them



We intervene if we become aware of potentially life-threatening behavior occurring



We respect students privacy yet do not always promise confidentiality—we may need to get others involved in order to ensure their well-being



We do not serve as **“babysitters” for students**



We are concerned with **students' safety so we educate** them on ways to keep themselves and others safe.

## Claiming Responsibility

Self-responsibility is one of the most important things your student can learn at college. It may initially take some trial and error for the lessons to kick in by, once they do, your student will have learned a valuable fact: no one is responsible for your life but you.

We expect student to take responsibility for their own lives. For example, they are responsible for:

- Their behavioral choices
- Following the rules
- Academic honesty
- Personal integrity
- Developing healthy study, eating and sleep habits
- Seeking academic assistance when needed
- Being a positive member of the campus community.

**That is why it is not up to you to “fix” things** when something happens. Many people are available to your student to help them right a wrong. As long as student take responsibility for their choices and actions, they will find support every step of the way

## BOOK MARK

### *Involvement = Success*

Studies say that students who are involved in campus life are more likely to stay in school. We believe that to be true, not because research tell us so, but because we have seen it!

When a student gets to campus, they are searching for a sense of belonging. So, they look to peer groups for acceptance and camaraderie. Getting involved in a campus organization is a positive way for them to belong while taking up with a bad crowd—just because **they “accept” them —isn’t.**

If your student calls and says they would like to join the campus programming board, try not to squelch their enthusiasm. They can focus on academics while participating in activities. Matter of fact, involved students tend to do better in school. So, encourage your student to get involved. You will be guiding them on the pathway to both curricular and extracurricular success.

## FERPA Facts

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law designed to protect the **privacy of a student’s educational records**. It **applies to schools receiving funds through a U.S. Department of Education program**.

Once a student turns 18, information from their student record cannot be shared with others — including parents — unless they give written permission. The law does allow an institution to disclose records without consent in some special cases. These include health and safety emergencies.

**Barton’s FERPA policies can be found at <http://bartonccc.edu/current/services/records/ferpa.html>** or by contacting the Enrollment Services Office at 620-792-9216.

## *Your Student's*

### *Well—Being*

We all agree: your student's well-being is of utmost concern! We want them to flourish, to learn from mistakes, to experience triumphs, and to stay healthy. And there are ways you can help in these pursuits.

## WELLNESS

Staying well can sometimes be a tall order for busy students. Yet, it is vital to their success. So consider:

- Sending healthy snacks instead of junk food
- Touting the benefits of good sleep
- Encouraging community service and involvement
- Suggesting simple ways to incorporate physical activity into their busy schedule
- Taking emotional issues seriously and encouraging your student to talk with someone like a counselor or advisor.

With your encouragement and support, students can stay well during their time at school

## ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

It is possible that your student will be tempted to experiment with alcohol and other drugs during their college years. You can help them make wise choices by:

- Talking openly about alcohol and other drugs.
- **Empowering them to say “no”**
- **Learning all you can about alcohol, “date rape drugs” and other substances**
- **Not glorifying your own “college drinking days”**
- Helping them learn from mistakes
- Leaving the lines of communications open for mutually respectful, adult conversations rather than judgments.

There are not guarantees that your student will always make the wise choices when it comes to alcohol and other drugs. Yet, Your efforts are bound to have an impact, whether big or small, recognized or unrecognized.

## *BOOK MARK*

### *A Web of Support*

Students who are struggling with various concerns can turn to:

- The Counselor
- Their Advisor
- Faculty and Staff
- Student Support Services Staff
- The Tutoring Center
- Campus Nurse
- Student Life
- Career Services
- Student Services Staff

Campus professionals are there because they truly want to work with college students and many have specific training to help them connect with this population. So, encourage your student to seek help rather than **“toughing it out” alone.** *Asking for help is a sign of strength* — make sure your student knows that.



## ACADEMICS

Ah, yes. The primary reason your student is at college is to learn. Be an academic supporter by:

- Regularly asking what he is learning
- Not always focusing on grades — talk about class content instead
- Encouraging them to seek academic assistance from a tutor, their advisor, a faculty member or student support services if they are having trouble — it is not a sign of weakness!
- Asking them to discuss class projects and papers with you
- Encouraging them to get involved in academic life, either by doing extra credit, participating more in class or asking questions
- Helping them figure out creative ways to balance work, social life, extracurricular activities and classes.

Taking an interest in what your student is learning and how he is learning it can go a long way.

## FINANCES

Encourage smart financial practices by:

- Warning your student not to apply for every credit card offered — credit companies prey upon students!
- Having them chip in to pay expenses rather than always relying on you
- Setting spending limits if your student is using a credit card that you provided
- Working together to set up a budget plan for the year
- Warning them about frequent visits to ATM
- Encouraging them to keep an eye out for scholarship opportunities

*Smart money management is a lifelong skill that will greatly benefit your student*

## BOOK MARK

### *The Campus Approach*

The odds of staying safe vs. becoming a victim will fall more in your students favor if they make some wise choices.

For example:

-  Not walking alone in isolated areas
-  Never getting in a car with someone under the influence
-  Refusing to accept drinks from strangers (a drug could have been slipped in)
-  Keeping their room locked
-  Not storing valuables in their room
-  Not giving out personal information to people met online
-  Reporting any obscene phone calls right away
-  Avoiding being alone in isolated places
-  Never becoming so intoxicated that they lose their ability to keep themselves safe.

*Share safety tips with your student and encourage them to keep their wits about themselves.*

*Campuses can be very safe places as long as students play it smart.*

# Preparing for a Bigger World.....

Your student's world is going to become bigger as a result of their college experiences. The things they learn in class, the people they encounter, the experience they have, the discussion they engage in, all can lead to greater understanding, acceptance and appreciation.

We want your student to become the best person they can be.

- A solid citizen.
- A compassionate friend.
- A critical thinker.
- An accepting individual.

All of this and more is possible, with your assistance.

## Role Modeling

Your student looks to you for an example. They will treat people a certain way and believe things about certain groups quite possibly as a result of your example. So, Consider your role in shaping their beliefs.

## Being Open to Diversity

Chances are that our student is going to be positively challenged by the new people they encounter on campus. The roommate with very different religious background, the classmate from a different ethnicity. All will open your student's eyes, if she is willing. Encourage this type of growth because a student who is open to diversity will experience the world much differently than one who is not.

## Contributing to Community

It may start out as a stint with student government. Then, our student may get involved in community service. Soon, they may be leading an organization or doing an internship with a group they believe in.

Community involvement means different things for different people.

**What's most important is that they just do something.** As your student prepares for a bigger world, it **doesn't mean that you will be left behind.** Freedom, independence, self-sufficiency. These are all things that we wish for students.

**Yet, they'll always need you.**

Allowing your relationship to evolve as your student dives into the college world requires compromise, flexibility and trust. With these tools at your side, the college experience can be a wonderful, eye-opening experience for both of you.

For more Barton Information visit the Barton Website:

[www.bartonccc.edu](http://www.bartonccc.edu)

or

contact Student Services at [studentservices@bartonccc.edu](mailto:studentservices@bartonccc.edu)

or

620-792-9282

or

Student Life at 620-792-9271