

Letting Go As Your Child Transitions to College

Children are not the only ones who face mixed emotions when leaving for college. Parents also feel a sense of loss mixed with joy. Parenting, as they have known it, changes forever when their child leaves home.

A child's first year of college is a transition year for the whole family. Many parents neglect preparation for this change. They focus their energy on their child's academics and details of leaving home. This busy agenda leaves little time for the parents and child to emotionally prepare for this life-changing event.



During the year before your child leaves home, take steps to prepare yourself emotionally.

Discuss your new parenting role with other parents.

Seek advice from experienced parents. Each parent approaches change differently. Choose a coping skill that aids you and your child.

Create special times to be with your child before he leaves home.

Schedule a vacation. Set aside days to spend together doing special activities. Enjoy his senior year in school.

Respect your child's changing needs.

She may have the desire to spend extra time with friends before leaving home. She also treasures time spent with you.

When Your Child Leaves Home:

Begin your new changing role as a parent.

Help your child leave home with confidence. Leave his dorm room with a smile and an enthusiastic goodbye. Without tears, use words to encourage and support him.

Find new activities and interests.

Embrace the change in your daily routine. Redirect your free time to pursue interests, hobbies or even a career change. Show your child how you successfully meet new challenges.

Discuss plans to meet during college breaks and on weekends.

Most college kids want and need weekends to study or engage in college events. Be sure to also schedule times when you can all be together.



Brought to you by Parent Help Line at HSHS St. John's Children's Hospital to help keep kids safe, healthy and happy.



Call the Parent Help Line. Help is just a phone call away.
1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week
www.parenthelpline.org



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