Advice from a College Mom...Summer College

By Tina M. Radcliffe

College mom Tina Radcliffe, wrote this article for CollegeTipsForParents.org, it gives some great tips and advice about handling the transition of having your first year college student returning home for the summer break.

Spring break is over and final exam schedules are being posted. Signs for the end of another college year are everywhere.

Your college student is probably planning for a summer at home. If it’s your first summer with a college student in residence you both may be in for a few surprises. Be prepared. Christmas break and spring break were simple compared to the long days of summer. A plan of action instead of reaction is the key to a successful summer. Have a strategic plan ready as you sit down with your student.

Topics to discuss:

- Curfew.
  Are there curfews? A student not accustomed to curfews for many months will have issues. Discuss them thoroughly and come up with a compromise that works for everyone’s benefit.
- Summer jobs and finances.
  Is your daughter expected to contribute to their school bills or their lifestyle needs? How much should be budgeted for summer fun and how much needs to be set aside for the upcoming school year? It is very important to discuss before your student announces they are taking a summer trip to the coast with their months savings.
- Household chores and family responsibility.
  Is your student expected to participate in family chores or assist transporting siblings? If you have no expectations for participation in routine family schedules then a family member who comes in at 4 a.m. and sleeps until 5 p.m. may not be a problem. However, if you come home from work and are internalizing irritation at the sink full of dirty dishes and the overflowing trash, eventually that irritation is going to show and perhaps not in the most construction way for either you or your student.
- Communication.
  What are reasonable and minimal communication expectations? Do you want to know where your family member is at all times? Is it necessary to know if they will be home for dinner? Do you expect a check in before you go to bed?

These may seem like oversimplifications; after all they just left for college a few months ago. They know the family rules and regulations. But after experiencing the sometimes complete freedom of college life, the homeland nest can be extremely suffocating. Do yourself and your student a favor. Sit down to discuss the plans for summer. This will ensure you all have a satisfying and productive few months, and neither of you will tersely counting down the days until college begins again.

First Generation Bowling Night!

On Wednesday, March 25 the First Generation program held it’s third social for the spring semester. Students braved the cold wind to walk to the El Paso Sports Bar and Grill in St. Joseph. Students bowled three games and enjoyed pizza, cheese bread and loaded french fries. Some students learned how to keep written score of bowling and all enjoyed the old fashion lanes.

Bowling Night
March 25, 2009
Move In Information for Fall 2009:

All returning students living in Lottie, Margretta, Brian, the campus apartments and the campus houses are strongly encouraged to return to campus on Monday, August 24 or Tuesday, August 25.

If you choose to return on Sunday, August 23, you may not move in or pick up your keys until after 2:00 pm. You are not permitted to move in prior to 2:00 pm due to the approximately 515 new first year students who will be moving in between 8:00 am and 1:00 pm on Sunday, August 23. Parking will be extremely limited and traffic into campus on that Sunday will be significant. We ask that you respect the 2:00 pm timeline for returning students to provide for the best possible (and least stressful) move in experience for both new and returning students and their families.

Please note if you (or your coach/supervisor) submitted an early arrival request you should have received a separate e-mail with instructions on what to do when you arrive.

Things to Keep in Mind on If Arriving on Sunday, August 23

- Do not arrive prior to 2:00 pm
- Parking will be extremely limited & traffic will be significant
- Please use the south entrance on College Avenue to access campus on this day
- Please do not attempt to drive to Mary Commons as the road and cul de sac will be reserved for first year move in

More information will be sent to your student via e-mail and available on the Residential life website this summer.

She Keeps Changing Majors—Is this normal?

The college experience will introduce them to new ideas and options. It is very common for students to change majors a number of times before they finally select one (or possibly two), most often during their sophomore year. This exploration time and process is very normal and positive. To assist her in her major and career exploration, below are some helpful strategies from the Career Services.

- Re-vist the “Discover Yourself” and “Discover Possible Majors” portions of ATLAS. (Achieving Through Learning and Searching)
- Take introductory courses in subjects that sound interesting which also count towards core requirements for graduation.
- Attend career exploration panels to listen to alumnae/i talk about what they have done with their majors.
- Meet with your Academic Advisor to discuss major requirements.
- Speak with faculty within the major departments you are considering.
- Seek out junior, seniors, and/or recent alumnae/i who have been in your shoes and find out what they like and dislike about their majors.
- Make an appointment with a Career Counselor to create an action plan for choosing or changing your major.

For more helpful advice visit the Career Services website at www.csbsju.edu/career.