



**Potsdam**  
THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

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## Student Issues

There's a seasonal ebb and flow when it comes to student issues. Here are a few things your student may be experiencing this month:

- ▲ Getting adjusted to college life for the first time (or once again)—feelings of loneliness and homesickness
- ▲ Worries about being able to handle academic pressures and schedules
- ▲ Anxiety about perceived restrictions of campus policies
- ▲ Roommate adjustments and conflicts
- ▲ Money management struggles
- ▲ Experimentation with drugs and alcohol
- ▲ International students may feel confusion, vulnerability and lack of advocacy
- ▲ Lack of social life and lots of questions about how to get involved in new activities

## Learning: A Lifelong Pursuit College is a Great Place to Start the Process

Being a learner isn't just reserved for the college years, but it sure is a great time to develop the philosophy of learning for the love of learning. Becoming a lifelong learner is something that can enrich a person's life, adding an element of curiosity and awe to everyday happenings.



So, how can your student make the most of her learning opportunities on campus while also developing lifelong learning skills? Encourage her to:

1. Choose group projects or papers that are topics she'd like to spend some time with—if she's going to be spending this much research and writing time, it may as well be with something that she finds interesting.
2. Pick a class that's outside the realm of what she'd normally study—she may find a new interest!
3. Focus on learning outside of the classroom, too—get

involved with campus organizations, from an intramurals team to the biology club to the school radio station to see how she can learn in non-classroom settings as well.

4. Talk with people who are different from her—a conversation over coffee with someone whose culture is different from hers can be incredibly eye-opening and fascinating!
5. Attend a campus event, lecture or workshop that she's curious about—it'll likely always feel like she "should" be doing something else, yet taking an hour or two to go experience something new can make the world bigger while helping her brain expand, too.
6. Find the learning within her job—maybe she'll gain a better understanding of what good/bad people management looks like after experiencing it or she'll have an opportunity to gain new technological skills... remind her to look for what she's able to learn everywhere!
7. Talk about what she's learning with family and friends—let her know that it's not unusual to talk about a polit-

continued on page two



## Learning: A Lifelong Pursuit

continued from page one

ical or sociological tidbit of information learned in class with her friends over dinner—all she has to do is start off with “Our professor mentioned that...” and she’ll soon find herself immersed in great conversation.

8. **Keep up with her readings**—she’ll be better informed, she’ll be practicing her reading-for-comprehension skills and she’ll be better able to engage in class discussions since she’ll know what she’s talking about!
9. **Read the school newspaper**—by tasting different media mediums, she’ll improve her critical thinking skills while also staying informed.
10. **Talk with faculty and staff about their experiences**—there are some uber-smart people on campus with fascinating stories to tell... encourage her to have a good listen.

All of this adds up to becoming a lifelong learner with a zest for life!

## To Bring a Car or Not To

This is a biggie. Having a car on campus is very important to some students. Everyone’s family circumstances differ. If you are exploring the possibility of your student having a car on campus, consider the following pros and cons:

### Pros

- Increases student’s ability to get to an off-campus job or internship
- Student is able to travel home more frequently and easily
- Going into town to buy supplies or groceries is less of a hassle
- Student can get away from campus to study or take a break
- Opportunities to get involved in the community become more accessible

### Cons

- The availability of parking
- Cost of gas remains high
- Student may travel home too frequently and lose out on campus experiences
- Costs associated with car upkeep, including oil changes and maintenance, can eat into student’s meager funds
- College students are considered “higher risk” drivers, therefore insurance rates may increase and strict regulations may be placed on them as drivers
- Students with cars are often pressured by students who don’t have cars to drive them places or loan out their car

If the possibility exists for your student to have a car on campus, consider this pro and con list carefully. Many, many students go through their college years without a car on campus. Not having access to a car can help them learn to solve problems creatively and to explore public transportation in ways they never would have otherwise.



## Insurance Tips

### Take Stock of the Stuff

Before your student heads to college in the fall:

- Have him take stock of his belongings, says the Missouri Department of Insurance.
- Have him estimate and itemize the dollar value of what he’ll have with him at college.
- Then, encourage him to update this list annually and keep it in a safe place, such as a safe deposit box or at your house.

When your student gets to school in the fall:

- Encourage her to ask about an “Operation ID”-type program, often run by the campus public

safety department in conjunction with residence life. They provide an engraver so students can engrave an ID number (NOT their social security number!) on the back of major items and then keep a list on file with public safety. This allows public safety to help students even more effectively should any of their engraved items be stolen.

Sources: Missouri Department of Insurance, <http://insurance.mo.gov>; Texas Department of Insurance, [www.tdi.state.tx.us](http://www.tdi.state.tx.us); Kansas Insurance Department, [www.ksinsurance.org](http://www.ksinsurance.org); National Association of Insurance Commissioners, [www.naic.org](http://www.naic.org)



# The 10-Year Anniversary of 9/11

September 11, 2001 will forever be etched in the minds of many as a day of loss, fear and confusion. As people watched national icons fall to pieces in real-time, many feared for the lives of loved ones and struggled to make sense of the terrible tragedy.

If your student was just a child when the attacks took place, she will now view these events through an adult filter. That day, 9/11, was a defining moment in her life up to this point, just as the Challenger disaster and JFK's assassination were for other generations.



As you prepare to honor this dark day in history, consider how you might acknowledge this important topic with your student. It's a time for raising awareness and honoring those we lost as well as those who served others.

## Engaging in Thoughtful Conversation

Here are several resources that can help you and your student create a thoughtful conversation about 9/11 from a variety of angles:

**A Day of Service.** 9/11 is a federally-recognized Day of Service and Remembrance. To find and support a cause that matters to you and your student, head to <http://911dayofservice.org>.

**Teachable Moments.** For some personal and community ideas about creating teachable moments related to the 10th anniversary of 9/11, from creating a day of gratitude to considering others who are living with terrorism, head to <http://melibeeglobal.com/2011/04/top-5-teachable-moments-the-10th-anniversary-of-911/>.

**The Dogs of 9/11.** A great deal of attention was placed on the dogs of 9/11. Highlight their heroic and selfless acts of kindness via the resources at <http://dogsinthenews.com/issues/0209/articles/020911a.htm>.

## Find Out more on Facebook

Sept. 11, 2001 united all of America and much of the world too. Head to Facebook to view the page that has been established in honor of the 10th Anniversary of 9/11 by searching "Never Forget 9/11 — 10th Anniversary."

**Campus Happenings.** Bismarck State College (ND) will be holding a symposium examining the effects of 9/11 on those living in the heartland. Harvard will sponsor a campus wide teach-in. Penn State Berks will feature a memorial exhibition in their art gallery, along with other events. At Florida International University, "Unity/Diversity" activities will take place, including a student film contest, an oral history project, a day of service and more.

Check out what's happening on campus and in the community, as you and your student remember this somber anniversary. While the world has moved forward since 9/11, looking back can sometimes provide illumination about important events in history.

Sources: Bismarck Tribune, 5/11/11; Penn State Live, 6/15/11; Harvard Center for Middle Eastern Studies; FIU News, 6/20/11

## Five Facts About the World Trade Center on 9/11

1. The north tower, 1 WTC, stood for 102 minutes, 5 seconds after impact. The south tower, 2 WTC, collapsed about 56 minutes later.
2. Each floor of the Twin Towers was approximately one acre in size.
3. People from 83 different countries died in the attacks on the World Trade Center.
4. The fires at Ground Zero burned for 99 days, until Dec. 19.
5. 2,749 death certificates were filed relating to the WTC attacks, as of February 2005.



# Your Student's Interests & Abilities: A Worksheet You Can Use Together

For a student, determining his interests and abilities is an important step when it comes to choosing a major. After all, most students want to pursue a major that both challenges and satisfies them. By answering the questions to the right, your student will have a more complete sense of just what type of major could fit him best. Ask him one day during some quiet time.... you might just be surprised at what you find out!

This is a tough time for many students heading to college. The economic uncertainties make it that much more difficult to select a major, out of fear that the one selected might not be the right choice. As your student wrestles with these decisions, remind him that the best major may just be the one that makes him the happiest, despite the worries about what the future holds.

## Tuning In...

Ask your student:

- ▲ What academic topics challenge you?
- ▲ What types of class projects do you look forward to?
- ▲ What kinds of ideas inspire you?
- ▲ What tasks speak to your interests and abilities?
- ▲ What kind of work would you be proud to do?

## Interests

- ❖ What activities are you drawn to?
- ❖ If you had free time in the next 48 hours, what would you do with it?
- ❖ What topics do you like to learn about?
- ❖ What academic subject matter do you have a passion for?
- ❖ What causes speak to you? Why?
- ❖ What do you answer when people ask you what you're interested in?

## Abilities

- ❖ What were your best subjects in high school and/or your previous higher ed institution?
- ❖ What are currently your best academic subjects?
- ❖ What talents have you used in your past jobs?
- ❖ What skills do you bring to your extracurricular activities?
- ❖ What abilities help you do a good job during community service projects?
- ❖ What talents and abilities would you like to develop?

## Making Move-in Day Memories

Take along a family member or friend whose sole responsibility it is to record the day's events. What a great keepsake! Whether it's with a digital camera or a video camera, the memories captured will last a lifetime.

Encourage the person to bring along a notepad and a pen too—there might be a chance to catch a funny quote for the day or to interview folks during some down time. A great digital or paper scrapbook could be created and sent to your student a few weeks after the semester starts—along with some friendly greetings from home—to remind him how much you love him.

