

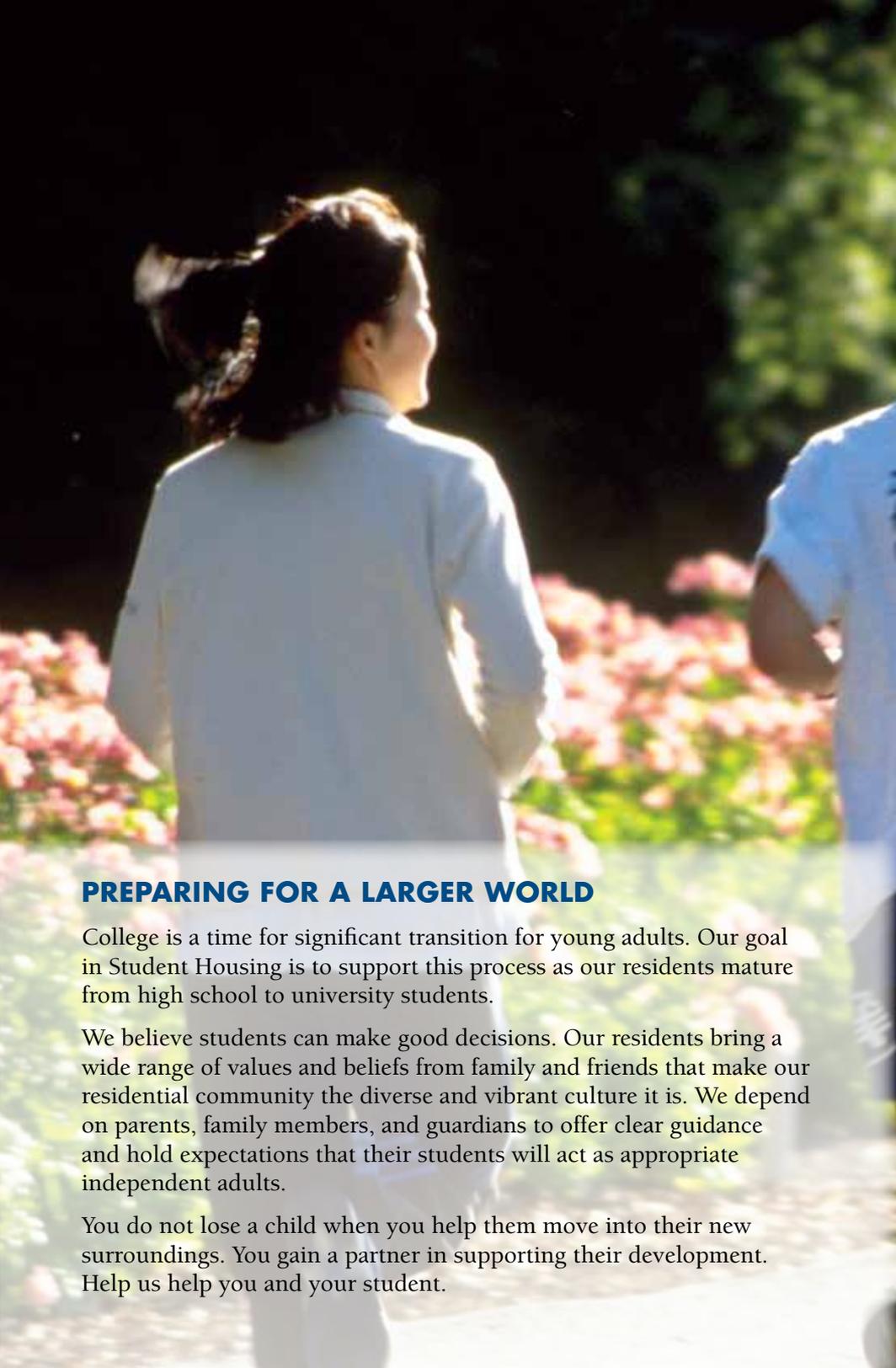
UC DAVIS
STUDENT HOUSING

Parents & Family Handbook

GUIDING YOUR STUDENT TO SUCCESS

In The Residence Halls and Transfer Apartments





PREPARING FOR A LARGER WORLD

College is a time for significant transition for young adults. Our goal in Student Housing is to support this process as our residents mature from high school to university students.

We believe students can make good decisions. Our residents bring a wide range of values and beliefs from family and friends that make our residential community the diverse and vibrant culture it is. We depend on parents, family members, and guardians to offer clear guidance and hold expectations that their students will act as appropriate independent adults.

You do not lose a child when you help them move into their new surroundings. You gain a partner in supporting their development. Help us help you and your student.



STUDENTS GO THROUGH A VARIETY OF DEVELOPMENTAL stages during their first year of college. The most crucial one is moving from “Dependence to Independence.” Students who have depended on parents to define boundaries are now on their own. They vacillate between happily making decisions and being fearful. One day they ask for assistance and the next day they resent their parents for interfering. Defining boundaries entails risk plus trial and error.

Staying Informed

As students transition to adulthood, how do you keep abreast of what is going on in their lives, especially if they aren't very communicative? It is common for parents to inquire about their student's well being.

Before you contact university staff members, consider the following:

When students enroll at UC Davis, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/) governs how UC Davis deals with student records. Except under certain circumstances, this federal law protects the privacy of all student records; it does not allow us to share any part of a student's record with anyone without the student's written consent. This includes conduct records, academic records and any records pertaining to student housing.

These protections can be difficult to comprehend, particularly for parents, families and guardians who pay for their student's education.

It is important for your student to be the primary source of the information that



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you receive. Encourage them to communicate openly and honestly with you about issues involving their education. This is a critical skill to develop and helps build trust and respect between parents, family members and students.

Emotional Support

College can be challenging. For many, it is a time of confusing relationships, redefined friendships, academic pressures and transition. Many have a hard time at first.

Students have a tendency to call home when they are having an emotionally difficult day. Many choose to share positive experiences with their friends and a higher proportion of the negative experiences with their families.

You can provide support and encouragement by asking your student to share some of their successes as well as their challenges. Students need to be reminded about the positive aspects of their college experience too.

Room for Mistakes

Students will make mistakes as they explore what it means to be an adult. Some mistakes are more detrimental than others, and many will be important life lessons.

The natural inclination is to correct a student when they head toward a choice parents do not agree with. While this is understandable, the end result may be that the student does not learn how to make decisions independently.

We suggest parents discuss options and allow room for students to make their own decisions. By making the wrong choice and dealing with the consequences, students learn to make better choices in the future.

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& your student

STUDENTS WILL TEST and ultimately learn to define their boundaries and take responsibility for their actions. The number of options and opportunities seem limitless and students are forced to choose between right and wrong decisions.

Computer Use & File Sharing

File sharing programs are popular among students as they are seen as a way to get movies, music, games and software for free. However, many of the things that students download and share are copyright protected, which means that downloading this material without permission is illegal.

The university takes copyright violations very seriously and students referred for these violations will have their university network access disabled. Repeat violations will also result in university disciplinary action. Students may also be subject to legal action.

Parents can help students by talking to them about what is on their computer before they come to college. Encourage your student not to use file sharing programs to download music, movies and other things for free.



student

RESPONSIBILITY

Alcohol & Other Drugs

Alcohol is not allowed in the residence halls for students under 21. Illegal drugs, including medical marijuana, are not allowed under any circumstance.

Many students believe alcohol use is a vital part of the college experience, and some will experiment with drug use. Often, students engage in behavior because they believe it is expected of them and that “everyone is doing it.” However, a large number of students choose not to use alcohol and drugs.

Parents and families are crucial in helping students make good decisions about the use of alcohol and drugs, and can encourage students to find a social group that makes healthy choices regarding these substances. Peer pressure is usually associated with negative behavior, but peer pressure can also support positive behavior, reinforcing responsible attitudes towards alcohol and other drugs!

Here are some resources you may want to review:

- UC Davis Student Housing’s *Guide to Residence Hall Life* available online at housing.ucdavis.edu/publications/guides
- SJA Student Conduct Standards (sja.ucdavis.edu)

Conduct Process

Students sometimes find it difficult to abide by the rules that govern living in a residence hall or apartment community. Parents and families can help students understand their choices and responsibilities as residents. Policies are located in the *Guide to Residence Hall Life* and *Guide to SSA*, available online at housing.ucdavis.edu/publications/guides.

Students who violate Student Housing policies will find themselves in our student conduct process. The goal is to educate students about our expectations and the impact their actions have on their community.

Parents and families can assist by encouraging students to be responsible and responsive in a student conduct meeting. Some students make the process difficult because they either ignore email messages from the department or don’t understand how serious the sanctions are. Encourage your student to deal with these issues quickly and directly.

Safety

Your student's safety is our number one priority, and we do our best to protect students from harm. The most effective way is to give them the skills to protect themselves.

Because students feel safe and “at home” in our campus communities, they sometimes make ill-advised decisions such as leaving their room doors unlocked, letting unknown people into the buildings, propping open exterior building doors and walking alone on campus late at night. These actions are unsafe.

It is critical that students keep their access card and keys with them at all times (even when going to the community bathroom). This is a vital step to ensuring personal safety.

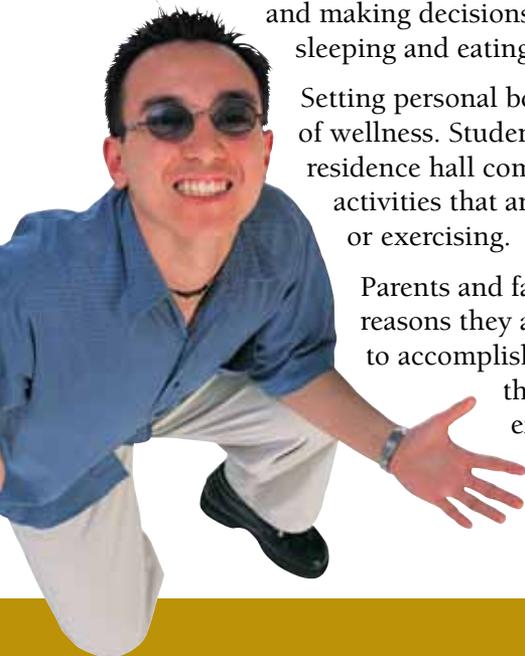
UC Davis provides a Safety Escort Service for students going to all parts of campus and nearby residential areas. Service hours typically range from early evening until midnight (check **police.udavis.edu** for current hours). We highly encourage students to use this service or walk in groups as an alternative to walking alone at night. Students can request an escort by calling 752-1727.

Wellness

Students generally transition from a structured lifestyle at home to an unstructured lifestyle at college. They create their own lifestyle for the first time – setting their schedules for sleep and exercise, and making decisions about diet. Developing consistent sleeping and eating patterns is the key to wellness.

Setting personal boundaries is another component of wellness. Students sometimes have difficulty in a residence hall community because there are always activities that are more fun than studying, sleeping or exercising.

Parents and families can remind students of the reasons they are in college and what they aspire to accomplish. Helping students make choices that provide an enriching and fun experience, as well as a healthy and productive one, is something a parent is uniquely qualified to do.



Academic Concerns

Many students find the transition from high school to college more difficult than they anticipated. They are surprised by the increased academic requirements and shocked when their grades drop. There is less structure to the academic rigor. Students are expected to follow the class syllabus and come prepared to each class.

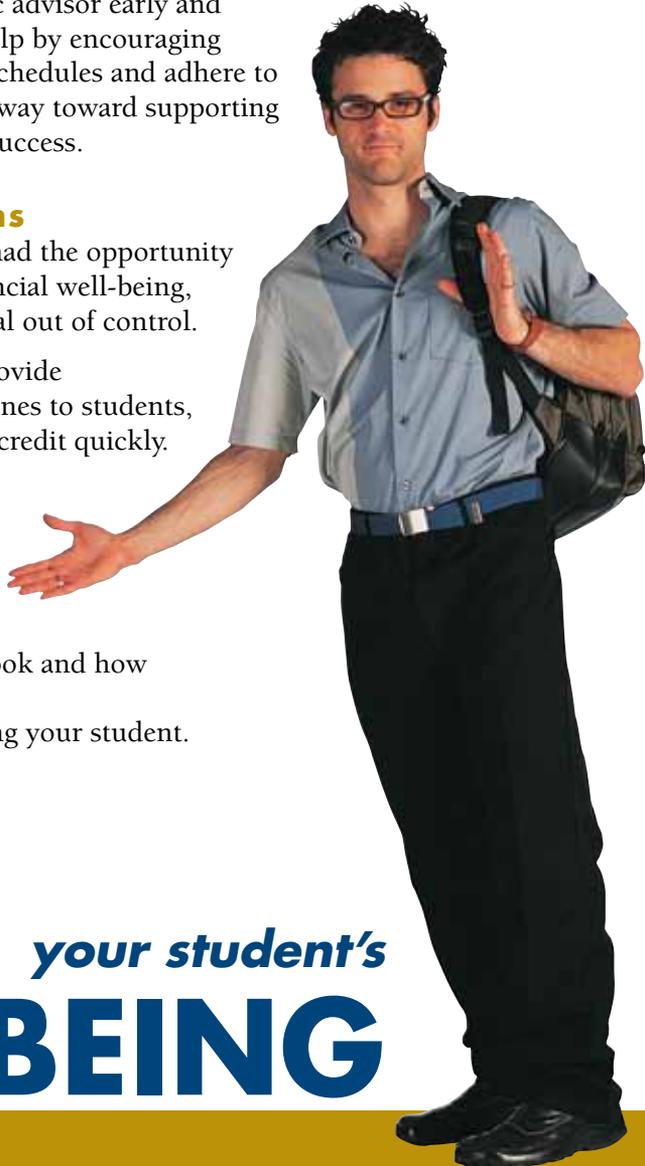
Parents and families should encourage students to seek out academic advising resources, whether in the residence halls, Dean's Office, or major department. It is important for students to connect with an academic advisor early and often! Parents can also help by encouraging students to create study schedules and adhere to them. This can go a long way toward supporting your student's academic success.

Financial Concerns

Many students have not had the opportunity to oversee their own financial well-being, and their budget can spiral out of control.

Credit card companies provide surprisingly large credit lines to students, who can "max out" their credit quickly.

Parents and families can help by discussing the basics of financial matters with their student. This includes how to balance a checkbook and how credit cards operate — a vital part of protecting your student.



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WELL BEING

MANY STUDENTS AND PARENTS are surprised by the substantial change in their relationship during the college years. The process of redefining roles and expectations can be difficult.

Trust

Issues of trust often come up. Parents who have been involved in their student's lives are no longer involved on a daily basis. Parents wonder what the student is doing when they haven't heard from them. In addition to safety concerns, they worry about choices being made in other areas.

Our experience indicates that students occasionally make unwise choices, but most maintain their value system and the skills necessary to make smart decisions.

Creating Identity

One of the most complicated processes students experience is establishing their identity. During the first year of college, students are in the process of defining who they are and expanding their independence. Many go through a process of "trying out" several new identities.

Students may seem different when they come home for the first time after being away at college. They may change their appearance (hair color, body piercing, tattoos) or the way they talk.

Sometimes more striking differences will be evident. Students may explore different spiritual traditions or parts of their personality they have kept hidden from parents, family and close friends.

Rest assured that your student is still the same fundamental person. This identity process is important in their development. This is how they figure out what works for them. Eventually, students settle into an identity that is uniquely their own.

TRANSITIONS

an evolving relationship

Healthy Distance

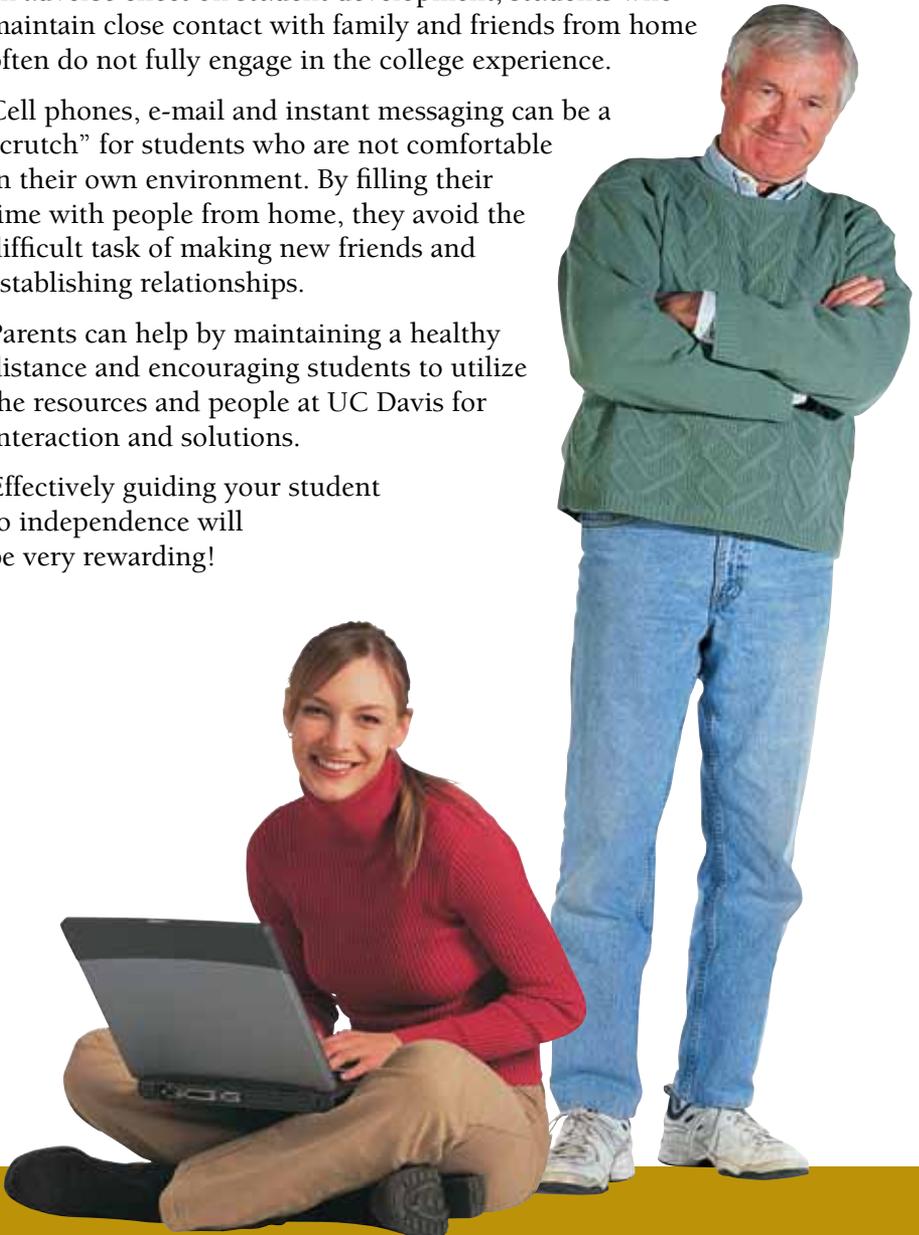
Due to advances in technology, such as cell phones and social networking websites, students and parents often stay in touch on a daily basis. This is different than in previous years, when a phone call once a week and the occasional letter or package from home was all the contact students had with their families.

New technologies make it easy to remain close. But this may have an adverse effect on student development; students who maintain close contact with family and friends from home often do not fully engage in the college experience.

Cell phones, e-mail and instant messaging can be a “crutch” for students who are not comfortable in their own environment. By filling their time with people from home, they avoid the difficult task of making new friends and establishing relationships.

Parents can help by maintaining a healthy distance and encouraging students to utilize the resources and people at UC Davis for interaction and solutions.

Effectively guiding your student to independence will be very rewarding!





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STUDENT HOUSING

FOR MORE INFORMATION ONLINE

Visit housing.ucdavis.edu/parents for additional information about Student Housing, including important calendar dates, Student Housing resources, policies and student accountability expectations, including the conduct process, campus resources for parents and families, and tips to help your student transition to the university.

STUDENT HOUSING

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