

# Parent Involvement: Ten keys to student success

The University of St. Thomas recognizes the importance of creating a working partnership with the families of our students. Our experience teaches us that such partnerships serve the best interest of your student. The following are ten keys to student success:

1. Talk with your student about the changes that will occur when they move on to college life, whether they live on campus or not.
  - Have an in-depth conversation about why does your student want to come to the University of St. Thomas?
  - Have your student schedule conversations with the high school counselor or a trusted family friend if you have not previously attended college. Participate in those conversations.
  - Have your student fill out all forms, seek additional information and meet the deadlines that the college has posted for admissions, residence life, financial aid applications, and applications for scholarships.
  - Pay attention to your student's leisure time, study habits, social life, and work schedule. Have they developed a pattern of drinking? These are all important things to discuss.
  - Have the discussion regarding financial matters, paying bills, credit cards, use of cell phone minutes, spending money. How will the money earned on the student's job be used?
2. Learn more about the academic and support services available to your student on campus. As soon as your student identifies a problem encourage them to use the services.

<http://www.stthomas.edu/parentresource/>

3. Encourage your student to set and achieve personal goals for the first 6 weeks of each semester they are on campus.
  - Encourage your student to use a personal planner or calendar.
  - It is important to spend two hours of study for each hour of class time.
  - Discuss with your student a schedule of study; include breaks, meals, physical activity, social time, and job. This schedule will change as they progress into each semester.
  - As your student progresses toward participation in sports, clubs and organizations, research projects and internships, make sure your student is doing 'the legwork' to be successful in these opportunities.
4. Encourage your student to take the first steps toward handling a difficult situation by examining their personal values and acting on them. Encourage your student to learn about and respect the values and



5. Support your student as they face uncertainty and learn to make decisions on their own.
  - Allow your student to share the 'emotion' of what they are experiencing; support them in making decisions and using the resources that are readily available to them, on or off-campus.
  - If they make a mistake, have them share what they learned from the situation. How will they deal with the situation differently the next time?
6. Allow your student to accept the consequences of his or her behavior, and take responsibility for their actions. Assist your student in examining failures, disappointments, unexpected or unpleasant experiences. If there is something unjust about the situation they are involved in, assist them in approaching authorities.
7. Know and understand the limitation on accessing student records under the federal guidelines of FERPA:  
<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html> and HIPAA  
<http://www.stthomas.edu/studenthealth/privacy/default.html>
8. Be alert to signs that your student is under significant stress, taking unhealthy risks or is ill. Discuss your concerns and encourage them to seek help to resolve the issues.

9. Encourage your student to participate in campus programs and job opportunities to develop meaningful relationships with other students, faculty and staff. Check-in with them about the impact of these experiences on their lives.
10. Encourage your student to participate in service learning experiences and/or study abroad.
  - Discuss your student's hopes for the experience.
  - Encourage your student to work closely with the Center for Community Partnerships or the International Education Office.
  - Encourage your student to fill out all the forms and to schedule and attend all preparation meetings.

*Adapted with permission from:  
**Desired Outcomes from Parent Involvement**, Marjorie Savage, University of Minnesota*



Parents are encouraged to take advantage of services available to them. For general parent information and involvement opportunities, please contact the Dean of Students Office, Sr. Sharon Howell, CSJ, 962-6076. For information and involvement in the Parent Network, please contact Amy Fistler, 651-962-6041.

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