



BACK TO COLLEGE TIPS 2021

PARENTS CAN USE TO KEEP STUDENTS SAFE AND PREPARED



The pandemic has changed what it means to go back to college. Here are 10 ways you can help your college student prepare for a safe and successful return to campus life.



1. PUT TOGETHER A MEDICAL SUPPLY/FIRST AID KIT

Both students who live in dorms and especially those who live off campus should add an emergency medical/first aid kit to their supplies list. Here's a link to a helpful list:

<https://www.verywellfamily.com/a-first-aid-kit-for-college-3200902>

Additional items such as flip flops are essential to safely use in common areas. For other move-in day and other essentials you might not think about, here's another comprehensive list:

<https://collegesofdistinction.com/advice/college-move-in-day-a-coll egepacking-list-of-essentials-for-your-dorm-room/>



3. TRAVELING SAFELY

The CDC has a listing of how to best prepare to be safe and help protect others at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-duringcovid19.html>

Also, check well in advance when making your travel arrangements such as airlines, bus lines, and trains, which have their own policies and may have certain restrictions about current travel.



5. RESEARCH RENTERS INSURANCE

Make sure your student finds out if they need renters insurance for their off campus housing. If they're living in a dorm, you can generally put your child on the family's home insurance policy. This site offers a ranking of providers who specialize in renter's insurance and also has guidance on what college students should look for in a policy:

<https://www.moneygeek.com/insurance/renters/college-students/>

2. CHECK YOUR SCHOOL'S COVID POLICIES



College and University rules and regulations vary regarding COVID including whether they require that students are vaccinated, which campus areas still require masking, etc. Have your student make sure that they are knowledgeable in advance about what is necessary to comply with their institution. Here is a national listing for college policies that is updated regularly: <https://www.bestcolleges.com/blog/list-of-colleges-that-require-covid-19-vaccine/>

4. HAVE TRUSTED EMERGENCY CONTACTS



The Umergency App, always free for students, allows them to connect to their personal emergency contacts. In addition to choosing their parents as trusted contacts, urge them to also select a few of their closest friends at school as well as dorm staff. Your student can reciprocate by letting their friends know they're ready to help them in case of emergency.

The Trusted Contacts feature is just one of the numerous life-saving tools that the Umergency app offers. For more info and to download the app, visit: www.umergencyapp.com.



STAY SAFE

IMPORTANT



7. MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

Even before COVID, mental health issues among college students such as anxiety, depression, or ADHD, have been climbing. So, in addition to the recommended health regimens above, it's critical for your student to be aware of changes in their mental well-being. For example, you could ask them: "What would you do if you're not feeling great physically?" or "Who would you reach out to if you are feeling depressed or anxious?" Ensure that they know about campus health resources and reinforce that campus mental health services can help.

For additional tips, see our May 2021 blog post at:
<https://umergencyapp.com/warning-signs-of-student-stress-tips-for-mental-health-awareness-month/>



9. HELP THEM STAY ON BUDGET

Finances can be very stressful, especially when they get out of hand. Your student can avoid the unexpected by understanding how to create a budget and staying on it. Make sure that before your student leaves for school you've discussed how to manage their finances with a view to the future.

Here is an article with some great tips:
<https://www.nerdwallet.com/article/loans/student-loans/college-studentbudget>

6. STAYING HEALTHY



Discuss how your student plans to stay healthy while at school. Make sure your student comes up with good solutions that will work. For example, if they don't have a daily workout regimen, share suggestions for exercise, nutrition, and sleep. This site provides a great "how to" guide on staying fit in college:

<https://www.affordablecollegesonline.org/college-resource-center/staying-fit-on-campus/>

A healthy social life is also essential to student's well-being. For example, your student should explore how to develop a work/life balance at school by joining clubs on campus that are of interest or student recreation and sports programs.

College life is not only about academics, but should also be fun!

8. TALK ABOUT ALCOHOL AND DRUGS



Prior to the pandemic, over 60% of college ER visits were due to alcohol and drug-related emergencies. Frank talk about the consequences of consuming alcohol and taking drugs is an essential conversation that all parents and students need to have. Parents should discuss how substance abuse and overindulgence can adversely impact or even end one's academic and personal life through unintentional alcohol poisoning and drug overdoses.

They should also ensure that their student is armed with the facts about such new deadly epidemics as fentapills, which use social media as a way to promote sales to young people.

For additional information on the fentapill epidemic, see our March 2021 blog post at:

<https://umergencyapp.com/the-frightening-rise-of-fentapills-what-students-need-to-know-about-the-deadly-threat-of-counterfeit-prescription-pills/>

10. REINFORCE THAT YOU'RE THEIR SAFETY NET



Make sure your kids know they can call you anytime, day or night. Remind them they can discuss anything with you no matter what. Let them know you will never judge them or get tired of talking to them. Tell them that you will always be there to provide advice or just to listen. Above all, tell them that being their parent is your utmost priority in life.

And remember, if they ever experience a health or safety emergency, the Umergency app will keep you both connected and prepared.