

# PARENT *alk*

## ***Navigating the College Transition***

Homesickness is a common occurrence for students transitioning to college with almost 70% of college freshman feeling homesick during their first few weeks or months away from home. While that time can feel infinite to students experiencing it for the first time, the good news is that it often dissipates quickly as students get involved on campus and invested in their classes. There are many ways to help your student acclimate to being away from home so that they can enjoy the time they spend at college!

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Help your student decorate their residence hall! Have them bring items that remind them of home - blankets, photos of family and friends, even stuffed animals. If it helps your student feel connected to home, they will feel less far away!



Set up weekly phone dates with your student to help them stay connected. You can call, FaceTime, Skype - whatever works best for you and your student!

Encourage your student to make new connections at college. They can join clubs & organizations, recreational sports leagues, study groups, or even talk to new people in class. Their schedules will be full in no time!



## Having a Conversation

As a parent, it can be hard to watch your student deal with homesickness during their transition to college. However, this is a significant transitional experience in your student's life, which will roll over into many other life experiences - starting a new job, getting married, or even having children. It is helpful to support your student through this transition without taking the experience away from them.

1. Remind your student that it is completely normal to feel homesick when starting college. You can encourage your student to talk to roommates or classmates about their shared experiences.
2. Talk to your student about their past experiences. This can include a transition in their life (e.g. starting at a new high school) or a time when they were away from home for an extended period of time (i.e. summer camp). Focus on the positive and explain that college will have the same positive experiences after they settle in.
4. Don't rush to visit your student at college - or rush to bring them home - the moment they express homesickness. Allow them to take this time to learn from the experience.
5. Encourage your student to get connected on campus. The more connections and friendship they make while at college will make the transition easier.
6. If your student does not start feeling better after the first few months or if they start withdrawing from regular activities, help them get access to resources on campus to cope with their emotions. Wellbeing coaching is a great resource to help your student develop a positive outlook on their transition!

## Diversity & Connectedness

While homesickness affects a wide variety of students, it can often hit much harder for students of diverse, historically underrepresented groups. These students often have a solid support system at home and feel nervous about making those same connections and supports in college.

EWU has several groups on campus that support diversity and help students get connected:

- Africana Education Program
- Chicano Education Program
- Pride Center for LGBTQ+
- Women's & Gender Education Center
- Veterans Resource Center
- Multicultural Center
- Disability Support Services
- Spiritual Life organizations

EWU works to support students of all diverse backgrounds and help them create long-lasting connections on campus!

## Campus Resources

Africana Education Program.....	509-359-2205
Chicano Education Program.....	509-359-2404
Disability Support Services.....	509-359-6871
Pride Center.....	509-359-7870
Women's & Gender Education Center .....	509-359-2898
Veterans Resource Center.....	509-359-2461
Student Activities, Involvement, & Leadership (SAIL).....	509-359-2514
Campus Recreation.....	509-359-4836
Wellbeing Coaching.....	509-359-4279
Counseling and Psychological Services Cheney Campus.....	509-359-2366
Counseling and Psychological Services Spokane Campus.....	509-828-1398