



a newsletter for parents & families



May 2017

## Leaving on a High Note

When it comes to the end of the year, students will likely feel best if they wrap things up right and prepare to leave campus on a high note. This can give them a sense of satisfaction and closure as they head into the summer, while also helping them positively anticipate the fall term.

What does leaving on a high note look like? Share with your student that it can involve...

- **Saying Goodbyes.** By choosing to say goodbye and let important people know what they mean to you, before things get end-of-the-year nutty, you're bound to feel a greater sense of completion. Leaving goodbyes until the very end, when there's never enough time, is never quite as satisfying.
- **Turning in Paperwork.** There's no need for administrative tasks to hover over you into the summer. Get them done now!



- **Leaving a Place Better than You Found It.** Take a look at your physical surroundings and be sure to leave them in very good shape when you move out.
- **Behaving Well.** Don't put anyone in a bad position as a result of your actions, including you! Strive to be remembered as a positive presence.
- **Thanking Faculty and Staff.** Let those folks who made a difference to you know... they'd love to hear it!

- **Following Up.** Whether it's a debt or a discussion, follow up so nothing is left lingering.

Talk with your student about what it means to her to "wrap things up right" and then provide all the support you can as she does just that!



"Year's end is neither an end nor a beginning but a going on, with all the wisdom that experience can instill in us."

~ Hal Borland



## Preventing End-of-the-Year Thefts

As students get into the spirit of spring weather and the school year ending, they often get laxer with their personal belongings. Unfortunately, thieves count on this mentality to make their move.

Remind your student that end of the year thefts can be easily prevented with a few simple precautions...

**Textbooks.** By writing his name near the binding of page 52 (or any

consistent page number) in each textbook, a student can tell public safety what to look for if a book is stolen.

**Locking Doors.** For both personal and property safety, encourage students to keep doors locked. Thieves become familiar with people's patterns.

**Unattended Goods.** Leaving a backpack or purse on the study table or failing to lock it up during a workout increases the chances of it walking away.

**Laptops and Tablets.** These are BIG targets. Does your student have a laptop/tablet safety device? Is the computer engraved with an ID number? These precautions can help track down thieves more easily.

**Cash.** It's *never* a good idea to have large amounts of cash on hand.

Remind students that the end of the year is one of the hottest times for thieves to strike. By taking some simple precautions, they can avoid some complex headaches.



## Making the Transition

As the academic year ends, students will be transitioning into their summer plans. And your family will likely be transitioning into a different pace, for a variety of reasons.

A few things to keep in mind to make these transitions work positively for everyone involved include...

- Communicate
- Don't Assume Things
- Think the Best of One Another
- Be Forgiving
- Embrace Change as an Opportunity for Growth
- Listen
- Be Flexible
- Share Laughs
- Love One Another

## This Month's 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...

- Anxiety and tension due to realizations that the year is ending and final exams are about to occur
- Senior panic about jobs, finances, etc.
- First year students are feeling somewhat confident because they feel that they have made it through the first year (almost!)
- Good feelings are evident as summer is near
- Lots of cramming, studying and wrapping things up academically
- End of the year socialization
- Packing and checking out
- Saying goodbye to important people and putting closure on the year





# Preparing for Summer Brain Work

Summer “brain work” is valuable in helping students keep their minds limber and active so they are ready for the academic rigor of the fall. For some, this may involve summer coursework, while others may follow a more informal learning track that includes reading, intentionally learning new things through one-shot classes or making sure to have some new experiences.

Whatever the case may be, intentionally keeping their brains in shape takes some planning. Here are a few questions to help your student get in that mindset...

- **What are two things you can do this summer that are smart moves career-wise?** These might include asking to job shadow someone in town doing a job that looks interesting, volunteering to help with a local event as a service and networking opportunity, and determining areas where you need to gain some experience.
- **What is a new experience you’d like to have this summer?** Maybe it’s something like traveling to a state park, doing

some family genealogy or trying a kayaking workshop.

- **What are three things you’d like to learn this summer?** Let the learning begin with things like how to plant a wildflower garden, some basic meals to cook, how to play tennis or how to start up an online Etsy shop.
- **How can you intentionally work your brain using books, online resources and other media?** This could include reading at least one “classic,” regularly following a site with thought-provoking articles, getting a documentary on a subject of interest and more.

Here’s to a learning- and experience-filled summertime, filled with valuable brain work!



## Low-Cost Ideas for Summer Learning

Summer involvement doesn’t have to be costly! Encourage your student to take advantage of...

- Continuing education classes
- Library, garden center or home improvement workshops
- Free events happening at local colleges
- Website videos to learn how to do something new
- Nutrition and cooking demos at grocery stores
- Volunteer opportunities with local agencies and organizations
- Town sports and recreation leagues

## 10 Tension Tamers

Stress tends to be in the air during this end-of-the-year season. Here are a few tension tamers to share with your student...

1. Get outside, even if it’s just for 10 minutes, to gain a different perspective and take some deep breaths
2. Do something active to get endorphins coursing through your body and the blood pumping
3. Connect with a friend to be reminded of the positive parts of your life
4. Put the academics away for a half hour so you can enjoy a cup of coffee and your favorite TV show
5. Unplug from various tech devices to give your eyes and your brain a break
6. Stretch, roll your neck and bend your back so your body can decompress and be ready for the next bout of studying
7. Talk with a favorite kiddo or elderly person to get outside of your own head and your own experience
8. Laugh by watching YouTube monkey videos or a Netflix comedy special to remind yourself that not everything has to be so serious
9. Take advantage of campus stress management programs, whether it’s petting dogs, doing yoga or getting a chair massage
10. Think about things you’re looking forward to this summer and let the anticipation melt your current tension into a puddle



## Why Pulling an All-Nighter is a Bad Idea

The long list of To Do's facing students at this time of year makes many believe they *must* pull all-nighters in order to get everything done. However, all-nighters are often counterproductive because...

- Lack of sleep impacts concentration and retention – both of which are essential when it comes to taking final exams
- It's easy to make mistakes when we're exhausted – which show up in rushed papers, projects and during exams

- Our health is compromised without proper sleep – making us more susceptible to sickness
- We can get grumpy and easily frustrated – which can impact our relationships and get us off track from focusing on tasks that must get done

Give your student this information as he makes decisions about whether to pull an all-nighter. It may feel like a “college thing” to do, yet it's not the only way.

## Connecting with Your Student This Summer

Whether your student is staying with you this summer or living somewhere else, there are ways to stay connected...

**Take Up an Active Hobby.** This can be a good way to spend some time while also getting great exercise! Consider golf, hiking, tennis or other companionable activities.

**Tap Into Skype or Facetime.** It's the next best thing to being there!

**Have a Reunion.** Meet halfway for a picnic if you're living separately. Or invite friends and family for a barbecue if you're living close by.

**Read the Same Book.** Give your student a book that you've both talked about wanting to read, and then read it yourself, too. It'll give you common ground to discuss the next time you're together or connecting from afar.

**Be Tourists.** Hit up the local cavern or explore back roads and flea markets. Make it an adventure to just hit the road and do something out of the norm!

**Send Wacky Postcards.** It takes 3 minutes to write out a postcard and pop it in the mail. So, arm your student with postcard stamps and get some for yourself – then pick up funny postcards along the way to let your student know that you are thinking about her.

It doesn't take much to stay connected, yet the benefits are invaluable!

### Tech Connect

- Send a tweet
- Text a quick note
- Message a smiley face or a joke
- Share an Instagram photo
- Find a funny or inspirational video on YouTube and send your student the link



## Heightened Emotions

Saying goodbye to dear friends. Worrying about final exams. Feeling stressed by the sheer number of tasks needing to be accomplished in a short amount of time.

Emotions are often heightened at the end of the year as students contend with everything on their plate. You may notice these emotions coming through in a text or Face-time chat. Some suggestions to help students handle this onslaught of emotions include...



- Breaking big tasks into manageable chunks
- Finding healthy outlets like a 20-minute walk or having lunch with a friend
- Planning how to say end-of-the-year goodbyes, before it comes down to the last minute
- Talking through things with a campus advisor, counselor, coach or trusted other
- Getting enough sleep so exhaustion doesn't exacerbate already-strained emotions

Sometimes, all students may be looking for is a listening ear to help them decompress and overcome a swirl of emotions. You can provide that, along with encouragement and support to help them make it