

HERE WE GO AGAIN; DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PARENTS



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WHAT IS A HELICOPTER PARENT?

“Cell phones, e-mail, and the Internet have made it easier for parents to stay connected with their children in college, often smoothing the transition for both parent and child alike. But the advent of instant communication is also blamed for the increasing number of parents who have become overly involved in the lives of their college-aged children, prolonging the passage from childhood to adulthood.”

Clark, D.H. (2006). Heliparents and e-kids. Pomona College Magazine, (41)2.

WHY ARE PARENTS MORE INVOLVED?

- Today's college students and parents are more connected to each other than any generation in our memory (Tyre, 2002).
- Parents and students talk an average of more than 1.5 times a day (Junco & Mastrodicasa, 2007).
- “Many of today's college students (the millennial generation) think it's perfectly normal to let their parents fight their battles” (Kelly, 2009).



WHY ARE PARENTS MORE INVOLVED?

- 72% of parents helped complete admissions applications.
- 65% gave advice about schools.
- 57% spoke with an admissions counselor.
- 50% helped select the college or university.
- 83% helped complete financial aid forms.
- 80% obtained aid for their children.
- 52% spoke with a financial aid counselor.

(Stringer, Cunningham, O'Brien, & Merisotis, 1998)



WHY ARE PARENTS MORE INVOLVED?

- Consumerism: “I’m paying for this.”
- Easy Access to information: Technology/Media/Social Networks.
- Rescuing: “My student is just overwhelmed by this.”
- Protecting: “I don’t want my student to be hurt.”
- Mom and Dad have done it so long, why stop now!
- Love: “I love my student and want to help him/her.”

WHY ARE PARENTS MORE INVOLVED?

- Interested in their student's academic progress.
- Need to know student grades.
- Involved in homework, as well as discussions of course material.
- More involved with choosing the student's courses.
- Number one influence on the student's choice of major.



FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS & PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

- Federal Law that protects the privacy of student records
- Once a child turns 18....
- Students have the right to...
- Parents have the right to...
- The university has the right to...

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS & PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

- **Student Information Release Authorization Form**
 - Does your campus have a form for students/parents to complete and how long does this form stay in effect?
 - Where is this information stored to know what you can do?
- **What information can be released?**
 - Academic information (e.g. grades & class schedule)
 - Student account/cashier information (e.g. amount due on a bill)

DISCLOSURE FORM

Disclosures

By applying for and/or continuing admission to/with the NKU School-Based Scholars Program, I agree to and understand:

1. To remain eligible for continued enrollment, all students must maintain the academic standards detailed in the admission criteria (can be found at <http://nkusbs.nku.edu>). Failure to meet one or more admissions criteria will result in removal from the program. In some cases, this may occur with little notice.
2. Tuition must be paid in full by the posted deadline each semester. Failure to pay by the posted deadline may result in late fees, interest, and/or removal from SBS class(es). Tuition varies by academic year. Check the School-Based Scholar's website (<http://nkusbs.nku.edu>) for the current SBS tuition rate.
3. Each student is responsible for purchasing the correct textbook(s) for each course prior to the start of the semester.
4. Each student is provided with registration, billing/payment, and textbook information each semester at an orientation event held at his/her respective high school. Students are responsible for providing their parents with this information. NKU is striving to be a paperless institution; as such, paper bills and orientation materials WILL NOT be mailed home; they will be posted to each student's myNKU account and emailed to the his/her NKU email account.
5. SBS courses are college level courses and may contain mature content not typical in a high school environment. By submitting this application, each parent and student understands that students may be exposed to mature content as part of the SBS course curriculum.
6. Detailed program information, the current SBS tuition rate, semester timelines, the NKU SBS Student Handbook, and the NKU SBS Student Success Kit are available online at <http://nkusbs.nku.edu>.
7. I understand that each student is responsible for reading and understanding the NKU SBS Handbook found on the SBS website. A hard copy is also mailed home each summer. This handbook covers all policies and procedures for participation in the SBS Program.
8. I give my permission to NKU to release grades, performance information, and other educational information to my parents/guardians and to _____ High School in conjunction with the School-Based Scholars Program.

Student's Name (Printed) _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian Date Signature of Student Date

CASE STUDIES/SCENARIOS

- Break into groups and read the case study you've been given.
- Discuss your experiences with similar situations.
- Formulate a plan for constructively working with the parent(s) and student to come up with a strategy for success.
- Discuss potential difficulties/complexities that could keep you from partnering with the parent(s) in this situation.

SKILLS NEEDED TO MANAGE PARENT CONCERNS

- Listening and hearing what the parent needs.
- Repeat back to insure a clear understanding.
- Patience to allow parent to share concern.
- Good oral communication .
- Awareness of non-verbal messages (you and parent).
- Good problem solving skills.
- Friendly and willingness to find the answers.



GENERAL TIPS (TOP 10)

- When possible, talk at eye level; do not have one party looking down.
- Don't argue or interrupt; just listen.
- Don't accuse or judge; just state how you feel about the situation.
- Put your qualifications on display.
- Never underestimate the power of a stern, disapproving look (Moore, 2011).
- Refuse to talk about other students.
- Give parents time to vent or cool down.
- Refuse to be intimidated; never let your emotions rule.
- Take responsibility when it's your fault.
- Pull, don't push (Marx-Talarczyk, 2006).

CONCLUSIONS

- Ensure that information about your institution is effectively and timely communicated to parents.
- Understand what is already being communicated from your institution to parents.
- Know and understand the legal implications of communicating with parents at your institution.
- Develop administrative tools and practices to assist with the management of parents
- Find positive ways to partner with parents.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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