

FAMILY GUIDE

HELPING YOUR STUDENT

College is not easy. There are classes to attend, homework assignments to complete, a large amount of information to process and learn, roommates to deal with, relationships to maintain, bills to pay, and all of the other tasks we complete on a regular basis such as cleaning, grocery shopping, and laundry. The point: students are busy and they have a lot on their minds.

It's easy to adopt habits and make decisions that do not help us achieve goals. Here are a few examples:

- Playing video games, socializing, watching TV, and so forth *before* homework and other class-prep work is complete
- Staying up late
- "Partying" to excess (alcohol and drug use)
- Not asking teachers, parents, school staff members, and friends for help when help is needed
- Living in an environment that is:
 - consistently distracting and not conducive to completing school work
 - inordinately stressful
 - far from campus (especially when a student doesn't have their own means of transportation to get to-and-from school)
- Missing class
- Not turning in homework
- Not paying attention in class

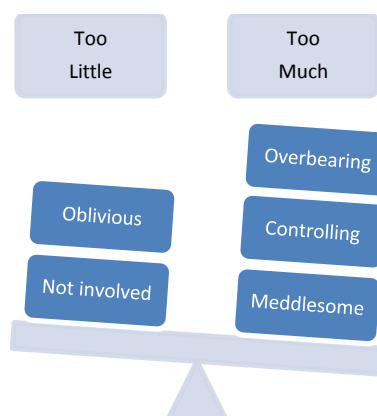
There are many examples. It is helpful when families continue to be involved in their student's life and ask important questions:

- **Study volume** – how much, how often
- **Bedtime** – too little rest makes everything difficult
- **Nutrition** – Ramen and frozen pizza are not food groups
- **Basic living questions** – budgeting, laundry, apartment cleaning, personal care/hygiene
- **Asking for help** – instructors, peers, academic coaches
- **Video gaming/time with friends** – fun is important but school should be their priority; how many hours per day are they playing video games? This is a huge problem for college students that can result in very low grades
- **Living situation** – relationship with roommates, transportation to-and-from school
- **Alcohol/drugs** – moderation or none at all
- **Grades** – we all makes mistakes; however, grades are often a good indicator of effort, the presence or absence of healthy habits/decisions, and ability

As you ask questions and listen, be supportive and available, and encourage your son, daughter, or spouse to explore the school, get involved in activities, talk to their instructors, develop interdependent (not dependent or independent) relationships with instructors/staff and friends, get to know their advocate, and, if they have counterproductive habits, make big changes.

Additionally, fight the urge to "take care of it." Empower your student to handle difficult situations on their own (with support and guidance from you).

- The more decisions they make, the more skilled they will become at making mature decisions
- Help them craft a problem-solving approach but let it be their approach
- Offer help, but don't force it: "Would you like to hear my thoughts/opinions?"
- Encourage them to work through a conflict, rather than avoid it
- Reaffirm decisions, but express concern when appropriate
- Refer them to their advocate or instructor. Remind them about resources such as instructor office hours, academic coaches, and video tutorials on lynda.com (which is available through the Neumont online library)



ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

Your student is experiencing newfound freedom and makes important daily decisions, such as “drink or don’t” and “use drugs or don’t.”

The reality: Underage drinking happens on every college campus; Neumont is no exception. Your role as family members -

- Help them understand potential consequences
- Help them clearly define their own set of rules: moderate consumption or none at all
- Help them develop an accurate understanding of reality: most college students overestimate the percentage of their peers that drink and use drugs, and how much other students consume—which makes some people think it’s “normal” to drink to excess
- Help them understand that there are other ways to spend their time -
 - Clubs and orders
 - School-sponsored activities
 - Choose friends who live by the “moderation or none-at-all rule”
 - Hike, bike, watch movies, bowl, go downtown SLC
- ...and that attending “parties” but not drinking (or drinking in moderation) isn’t “lame”

HOUSING

We strongly advise students to live in Neumont-sponsored housing for at least a year. Here’s why:

	NEUMONT HOUSING PROGRAM	OFF-CAMPUS
RENT EXPENSE	\$470/month	\$300-375/month
GAS FOR CAR	\$0	\$5-\$20/week = \$20-\$80/month
UNFORESEEN EXPENSES	None - the cost is fixed, even if a roommate moves out	Unknown - remaining residents cover the rent share for roommates that move out; utilities may vary each month
FURNITURE EXPENSE	\$0	This could be several hundred dollars per roommate
PROXIMITY TO CAMPUS	5 minutes	5-30 minutes
DISTRACTIONS	Pay one organization one time per quarter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay many organizations every month • Finding a place, moving
FLEXIBILITY	If you don’t like your roommates, you can choose another NU apartment	If you don’t like your roommates, you are stuck until the lease expires or you find a replacement
ACADEMIC SUCCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study partners live all around • Higher GPA • There is ALWAYS a ride to campus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other than roommates, there are probably few study partners around • Lower GPA • You are at the mercy of your car or your roommate’s whim • Focus is on things other than school

We strongly advise parents to –

- Consult your son or daughter’s advocate about moving decisions; they can contribute valuable information as your family makes a decision
- Remember that financial involvement makes you the boss
- Consider the pros and cons of moving off-campus after the first year
 - Maturity level – some can handle it and benefit, others cannot
 - Academic strength
 - Proposed roommates
- If your son or daughter has already moved out of Neumont housing –
 - Ask direct questions to help you understand whether or not the living situation is right for them. It may be; it may not be.
 - We often hear from off-campus students who are missing a lot of class that the cause is a lack of transportation: “My roommate doesn’t like to get up in the morning so I have no way to get to school.” Does your student have a reliable way to get to school every day of the week and in time for their own classes? Are they able to stay at school as late as they need to or do they rush home—and miss tutoring and other opportunities—because their ride leaves at the end of class?
 - If your student’s living situation is hurting their ability to succeed in school, make alternate arrangements: another apartment with friends or move back into Neumont housing

RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

Call your student’s advocate or send an e-mail to parent@neumont.edu, which goes to the Neumont University Dean of Students.