

# Help! I Need Somebody!

## What to do when your child is struggling

**C**all it a parent's intuition, but you know when it's time to ask, "What's wrong?" and you know how to help. Yet, when your child is away at school, you may not be able to step in so easily and help make things right. Don't worry! There are plenty of folks on campus to help your student, no matter what the problem is.

### Academics

If your child is struggling with her classes, ask if she has spoken with any of these people:

- Professors know the material better than anyone, so why not go straight to the source? Ask your child if she has visited her professor during office hours or after class.
- Perhaps the professor has made arrangements for supplemental instruction, taught by a tutor who has experience with the subject matter. This type of instruction is usually connected directly to what the professor is teaching in class and offers another way of learning the material.
- Check with the campus Learning Lab. They have tutors to help students. These are usually older students who have aced the class and can help explain the material in a different way than the professor.
- If you sense that your student is really struggling, or perhaps she was diagnosed with a learning disability in high school, suggest that she talk with someone in the Office of Disability Services. She might be entitled to extra time to take tests or a quiet testing area, free from distraction.
- Don't forget the Academic Advisor. She might be able to offer other options specific to your child's campus.



### Housing

If your child is having a problem with his roommate, encourage him to talk to the roommate. Often times, small things are ignored too long and turn into bigger problems.

- Make sure he has told his roommate nicely what is bothering him so his roommate can correct the

problem. If it persists, there are people to help.

- Encourage your child to talk with residence life staff. They are most likely trained in mediation and can help roommates come to a compromise.
- Ask if there are peer mediators on campus, other than the RA. These people will be even better trained in helping students resolve a conflict.
- If your child doesn't feel like it's working out, suggest he talk to someone in the Residence Life or Housing office. They will make the determination whether a room change is necessary (or even possible) and can help finalize that process.

### Emotional Health

When something big, like a death in the family or a divorce, has happened, your child might feel overwhelmed. Or if you sense that her class load is particularly tough, you might suggest she seek someone to talk to on campus about it.

- The Campus Counseling Center offers licensed professional who will listen to your child and help her find balance.
- Wellness Centers might offer counseling in addition to other tools to help students cope with classes. For example, they might offer trainings on time management or organizational skills.
- Career Services can help a student define why she is at college. They provide testing to help students decide on career interests and possible majors.

### Physical Health

- If your child is ill, encourage him to visit the Health Services office. They can usually dispense medicine to help ease a cold. If it's something more serious than that, they can make a referral to a local doctor if they don't have one on campus.
- Some schools have a Women's Center for health concerns specific to women. A nurse practitioner might be on staff to conduct exams and distribute prescriptions.
- If your child is concerned about gaining the "freshman fifteen," encourage him to find the campus fitness center. There should be a trainer available to help create a workout plan so he doesn't overdo it. Regular exercise can also help keep stress levels down!