

What to Do When Your Child is Having Difficulty

College is a big transition in anyone's life. There is intellectual stimulation, new relationships, increased choices, and greater autonomy. It is not uncommon for students to experience difficulty during this period of adjustment. Below are some suggestions for helping your child through the transition.

- ***Listen carefully to your child's concerns and complaints.*** See if there is an immediate solution that your child is not thinking about.
- ***Let your child structure the conversation.*** Sometimes they will just need a listening ear for them to vent to. Keep in mind that you may be left feeling worried and concerned, but after giving your child the opportunity to talk, they may be feeling more relaxed. If you are still feeling worried the next day, contact your child to follow up and see how they are doing.
- ***Set realistic expectations about academic achievements and grades.*** Not every 'A' student in high school will be an 'A' student at Union. The academic environments are significantly different. It is important for you to be supportive and focus on your child's development and what they are learning rather than on specific letter grades.
- ***Allow your child to explore their academic opportunities.*** If your son or daughter decides to change their academic pursuits from what they originally intended, or from what you believe they should be studying, it is important to allow them to do this. They have to work in their career for the next 30+ years, not you, so be supportive of any changes they make.
- ***Stay in touch.*** Many students feel that they cannot call their parents in times of crisis because of the distance. Your child needs to be aware that you are available to talk about everyday events and difficult issues. One way of doing this is to develop a plan to stay in touch on a regular basis. Care packages are always welcomed by the students as well.
- ***Encourage your child to seek assistance from the resources available on campus.*** Remind them about Advising, the Counseling Center, the Becker Career Center and Health Services, along with the various staff members and faculty members that are available to them.
- ***If you are concerned that they may not be reaching out for support, please feel free to contact us yourself.*** You can contact the Counseling Center by calling (518) 388-6161. We recommend discussing this with your child first so that they are aware that you are going to make a call.