

# a new chapter

How parents fit into their students' lives at college

## How Students Stay Safe

Safety is likely one of the main things on your mind as you send your student to college. Here are some of the tips we'll be sharing with him or her that you can help reinforce as we all work together to keep students safe.

### Room & Apartment Safety

- Always lock your door, especially when you're inside sleeping or when you go out.
- Don't let strangers into your room. Look through a peephole, ask for ID or meet them in the hallway.
- Don't post notes on your memo board, Facebook page, IM or voicemail, saying where you are or providing personal info.
- Don't keep valuables in plain sight. And don't have too many valuables with you in the first place!
- Don't give out your room key/card.
- Don't put your full name or phone # on your mailbox.
- Lock windows.

#### Lost Room Keys/Cards

Report a lost room key/card to the appropriate staff immediately! Someone can use it to gain entrance to your room, apartment or car to hurt you or your belongings. Plus, when you share space with roommates, not reporting a lost key/card can end up causing them harm, too.

### Parking Lot Safety

- Have your car key in hand, ready to put in the lock, as you're walking toward your car.
- Walk to your car with someone you know and trust, especially when it's dark.
- Look in the backseat before entering the car to make sure no one is hiding back there.
- Always keep your car locked, whether you're in it or not.
- Park as close as you can to your destination. If that's impossible, ask public safety for an escort.
- If you're sitting in your car in the parking lot, lock the doors so no one can take you by surprise.

### Date Rape & Sexual Assault

- Don't be alone with someone you just met.
- Clearly communicate your intentions – say "No" and mean it. And listen when someone else says "No"!
- Keep a level head. Alcohol or other drugs compromise your safety by lowering inhibitions and clouding your judgment.
- Be aware of date rape drugs that can be slipped into your drink.
- If you go somewhere with friends, make sure that everyone is accounted for before leaving.
- Trust your gut—your instincts say a lot.

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### Personal Safety

- Make it tough for someone to take you by surprise—don't wear ear buds or headphones when walking, running or studying alone.
- Head toward crowds, lights and buildings if you're being followed.
- Don't walk alone, especially after dark. Call the campus escort system or walk with friends. Stay on populated, well-lit paths.
- If someone is stalking you, report it to public safety immediately. A restraining order or some other action may be taken to keep you safe.
- If you get threatening calls, texts, emails or messages of any kind, keep track and turn things over to staff that can help. Don't engage these threatening unknown people or give away any personal details either.
- If you have to work in an isolated lab, practice room or study lounge, tell someone or ask someone to come with you.
- Don't abuse "legal" prescriptions or give/sell them to others—this can lead to unintentional overdoses, bad meds/alcohol reactions and other bodily harm.
- Realize that being under the influence of alcohol and other drugs delays your response time in emergencies, compromises your judgment and safety, and causes you to take unnecessary risks.

### Keeping Your Stuff Safe

- Install a safety lock or tracker on your laptop.
- Don't leave your book bag unattended. Use a gym locker or carry it around the library with you.
- Always lock up your bike.
- Don't leave a large amount of cash in your room, even if it's "hidden" in your sock drawer.
- Keep your blinds pulled at night and when you're out so potential thieves can't see what's "available" to them.
- If there's a campus engraving program, register your big-ticket items like laptops, TVs, DVRs, bikes and more.

### Community Safety

- Close propped doors immediately and report repeat problems to campus staff.
- If someone threatens you or someone else based on race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ability or other characteristics, get help right away.
- Report the presence of strangers and don't let strangers into the building, even if they tell you that they're visiting a friend. Offer to call their friend for them instead.
- Report things like slippery floors, leaks, broken glass, missing screens, burned out lights, broken doors/furniture and emergency equipment that's not working.

#### When Others are Impaired

Don't argue with intoxicated or drugged individuals or try to reason with them. If someone is irrational and angry, it's best to keep your voice calm and save the rational conversation for later.

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### Fire Safety

- Know exactly where your emergency exits are located so you can go on “automatic pilot” if there’s a fire.
- Always heed the fire alarm, even when you believe it’s “just another drill.”
- Don’t use illegal appliances, candles or incense in the residence halls.
- Be careful when smoking... cigarettes have caused many fires.
- Don’t tamper with fire equipment such as extinguishers, hoses and alarm boxes. Malfunctioning or missing equipment can mean life or death in a real fire situation.
- Don’t drape scarves or other fabric over lamps. Left unattended, they can easily catch fire.
- Suspect fire in the hallway? Don’t open your door. Instead, feel it to see if it’s hot, stuff towels or sheets under your door to lessen the smoke, and stay close to the ground where the air isn’t as smoky.

### Social Media Safety

Things to think about on Facebook, My-space or other social networking sites:

- Create a Safe Password—can others easily guess yours?
- Guard Your Reputation—what impressions are you creating?
- Realize Posted Info is Often in the Public Domain—is your private info being compromised?
- Be Accountable—are you doing anything illegal or harmful to others?

### ICE

Program ICE—it stands for “In Case of Emergency”—into your cell phone right now. Have a few ICE contacts that you can count on. That way, if something happens to you, emergency personnel can access your phone and know whom to get in touch with right away.

### Campus Threats

- Listen carefully when staff and public safety tell you what to do. They’ve been trained to lead you to safety.
- Try not to panic or assume the worst. Instead, take care of the immediate concern: getting safe!
- Take drills seriously and encourage others around you to do the same.
- Don’t ever make a threat as a “joke.” If you do, you’ll cause panic, waste resources and likely be suspended or arrested.
- Have a healthy suspicion that causes you to alert staff when strangers are places they shouldn’t be or when something just doesn’t seem right.