



November 2010

Student Issues

There's a seasonal ebb and flow when it comes to student issues. Here are a few things your student may be experiencing this month:

- ▲ Roommate problems and floor tension
- ▲ Academic pressures due to procrastination, workload and lack of ability
- ▲ Burnout
- ▲ Not feeling like they have the stamina to keep up the pace through finals
- ▲ Job search stress for holiday break
- ▲ Problems from increased alcohol consumption
- ▲ Lack of initiative to find new friends or activities because it seems social groups are already set up
- ▲ Concerns about going home at Thanksgiving time—whether it's concern about seeing changes among old friends, how things will be with family members or dealing with a romantic relationship

Social Host Liability

The Law That Impacts You & Your Student

Planning to let your student host a party at your house? There are important social host liability laws to take into consideration if so.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) describes social host liability laws as “laws that hold individuals responsible for underage drinking events on property they own, lease, or otherwise control.” Those responsible can be students, parents, landowners and tenants.

MADD goes on to say that, “Unlike laws that prohibit furnishing alcohol to youth under 21, social host laws focus on preventing underage drinking on private property without regard to who furnishes the alcohol. Their focus is on the venues in which underage drinking takes place rather than on the furnishing of the alcohol.”

The Impact of Hosting Underage Drinking Events

Social host liability can apply in situations when underage drinking occurs at someone's house, even if they aren't home. If someone is injured at a party hosted at that home, these laws can kick in, too. Older students, siblings and other relatives need to be aware of these dangers so they can make smart choices.

Social host liability laws hold adults who serve or provide alcohol

Social Host Laws in Your Neighborhood

To search specific social host laws in your area, go to www.alcoholpolicy.niaaa.nih.gov/Prohibitions_Against_Hosting_Underage_Drinking_Parties.html

to underage people criminally liable if that minor is killed or injured—or if that minor kills or injures someone else. Check out the nuances of your state laws to see how social host liability is interpreted.

Unlawful social hosting is considered a crime in 24 states, as of Jan. 1, 2008, and can result in civil lawsuits against hosts in 33 states. Violations may result in civil or criminal fines, prison terms and monetary damage awards, depending on the jurisdiction.

Keep social host liability issues in mind and educate your student too. Your student needs to be aware of the consequences to hosts, should he drink underage at someone's house. Let your student know what the consequences to him could be, should he decide to host a party. The outcome could be dangerous in a wide variety of ways—and potentially lead to legal troubles—for those involved.

Source: MADD, www.madd.org/Professionals/Social-Host/Social-Host-Liability.aspx



Smoking Among College Students

According to the American Cancer Society, smoking-related diseases remain the world's most preventable cause of death. Unfortunately, despite public warnings and educational initiatives, there have still been more than 12 million premature deaths attributable to smoking in the U.S. since 1964.



Worldwide, the number jumps to 5.4 million each year.

Held annually on the third Thursday of November, the Great American Smokeout takes place on Nov. 18 this year. Consider sharing some of these telling statistics with your student in honor of this important day:

- An estimated 8.6 million people suffer from chronic conditions related to smoking, such as chronic bronchitis, emphysema and cardiovascular diseases.
- Smoking accounts for at least 30% of all cancer deaths and 87% of lung cancer deaths.
- The risk of developing lung cancer is about 23 times higher in male smokers and 13 times higher in female smokers compared to lifelong nonsmokers.
- Between 1965 and 2004, cigarette smoking among adults aged 18 and older declined by half from 42% to 21%, with rates further declining to 20% in 2007.

Of particular note is that the 18-24 year old age group continues to have the highest smoking rate among all adults, according to www.bacchusgamma.org. Some students begin using tobacco in college

and most want to quit before they graduate. Unfortunately, it's not that easy.

Passive Smoking on the Increase

You can also raise awareness about the dangers of secondhand smoke. Researchers from the Section on Society and Health in the Department of Social Sciences and Health Policy have drawn attention to the increasing exposure of college students to secondhand smoke and the related health issues.

During a 2009 study, researchers surveyed more than 4,000 undergraduates, with 83% of them reporting having been exposed to secondhand smoke at least once in the last seven days (www.medindia.net).

Students reported that most of the secondhand smoke exposure took place in a restaurant or bar, followed by in their home or in the same room. Daily and occasional smokers were more likely than nonsmokers to report exposure, as were binge drinkers. The researchers also found that students living in Greek houses or off-campus housing, attending a public school versus a private school, and those who are female or of white race appeared to be associated with increased exposure.

Sharing this information can be a real eye opener for your student—and his peers.

What Students Are Nervous About Going Home for the Holidays

It's likely that the buzz about the holidays has begun. Thanksgiving Break will be here soon and, shortly thereafter, winter holidays abound! Although there will be a lot packed into the next few weeks as students finish up assignments and take exams, it's important not to forget that preparing to go home for the holidays can be a stressful time for your student.

What You Can Do

First, consider some of the things your student might be most nervous about:

- ▲ Sharing a new or different aspect of who she is
- ▲ Seeing a parent or sibling they've fought with over the phone during the last few months
- ▲ Seeing old friends or an old partner
- ▲ Discussing a change of plans such as major choice, plans for upcoming breaks or wanting to go to a different school
- ▲ Coming clean about poor grades or getting in trouble at school
- ▲ Having to conform back to your rules and ways of doing things

Don't be afraid to draw on your experience as you talk with your student. Taking the time to talk with your student candidly and supportively during the next few weeks will help make the holiday break, whatever it may hold, more pleasant all the way around.

Food for Thought

Preparing meals at home, as you well know, requires safe food handling. As you prepare to deliver care packages to your student or to send them back to school with perishable food, ensure that the same amount of care is taken and attention is given to keeping these foods safe too.

Bacteria can grow without making its presence known until it's too late. So, here are some tips from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service to keep food safe.

- Never leave perishable food out of the refrigerator for longer than two hours. If it spends more than an hour in temperatures above 90 degrees F, toss it then, too.
- Keep hot food hot (at 140 degrees F or above) and cold food cold (at 40 degrees F or below). Bacteria grow rapidly between 40 and 140 degrees F.
- Use safely refrigerated food in 3-4 days; frozen leftovers in 1-2 months.
- Thaw frozen meats in the refrigerator, not out on the counter.
- Wash your hands before and after prepping foods.
- Wash used cutting boards and utensils in hot, soapy water.
- When microwaving foods, don't use margarine tubs, take-out containers, whipped topping



bowls and other one-time use containers, as they can warp or melt, possibly causing harmful chemicals to migrate into the food.

- Microwave plastic wraps, wax paper, cooking bags, parchment paper and white microwave-safe paper towels should be safe to use.
- Don't let plastic wrap touch foods during microwaving.
- Never use thin plastic storage bags, brown paper or plastic grocery bags, newspapers, or aluminum foil in the microwave.
- Remove food from packaging before defrosting it in the microwave. Don't use foam trays and plastic wraps; melting or warping may cause harmful chemicals to migrate into food.
- Cook meat, poultry, egg casseroles and fish immediately after defrosting in the microwave oven because some areas of the frozen food may begin to cook during the defrosting time. Do not hold partially cooked food to cook later.
- To keep foods like soup, chili and stew hot, use an insulated container. Fill it with boiling water, let it stand for a few minutes, empty, and then put in the hot food. Keep the insulated container closed and the food should stay hot (140 degrees F or above) for several hours.
- When carrying cold perishable food like raw hamburger patties, sausages and chicken, use an insulated cooler packed with several inches of ice, frozen gel packs or containers of frozen water.

Safe As Is

Foods that don't need refrigeration or careful packaging, according to the USDA, include:

- dehydrated foods
- beef jerky and other dried meats
- dried noodles and soups
- peanut butter in plastic jars
- canned ham, chicken

- Perishable cooked food such as luncheon meat, cooked meat, chicken, and potato or pasta salads must be kept refrigerator cold.
- When packing a cooler, be sure raw meat and poultry are wrapped securely to prevent their juices from cross-contaminating ready-to-eat food.
- Cook meat and poultry completely. Partial cooking of food ahead of time allows bacteria to multiply to the point that subsequent cooking cannot destroy them.
- For transport, cooked foods should be divided into shallow containers and cooled in the refrigerator prior to the trip. Place foods in an insulated cooler packed with several inches of ice, frozen gel packs or containers of frozen water—or freeze the foods prior to the trip. Just be sure to refrigerate them as soon as you arrive.

Source: www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/Food_Safety_Tips_for_College_Students/



Enhance Community Connections through Meetup Groups

Now that your student is in school, you may find yourself with a bit more time for yourself. And it's well deserved! If you'd like to spend that extra time pursuing a new or neglected interest within a community of others, then [Meetup.com](http://www.meetup.com) may be your cup of tea.

Meetup is the world's largest network of local groups. Meetup makes it easy for anyone to organize a local group or find one of the thousands already meeting up face-to-face. More than 2,000 groups get together in local communities each day—in 45,000 different cities—each one with the goal of improving themselves or their communities.



From Poker Meetups to Knitting Meetups, you can explore a hobby. Ghost Tracking Meetups, Investors Meetups and Writers Meetups allow you to discover something new.

There are also Pug Lover Meetups, Scrapbooking Meetups, Italian Language Meetups, Book Club Meetups... the list is extensive! It's virtually impossible to find something that won't strike your fancy.

Meetup Groups can be a great way to expand your community connections. Simply sign up at [Meetup.com](http://www.meetup.com) and then group organizers gather people together in coffeehouses, restaurants and living

For more information about Meetup Groups, head to www.meetup.com.

rooms to share experiences. Enter your zip code to find out what groups are already established in your area. Or start your own! Meetup Groups meet regularly in 55 countries around the world, so chances are that something interesting is happening in your neck of the woods.

Or, if your student is looking for a way to pursue an old passion or a new interest, there just might be a Meetup Group for him, too.

Here's to an enhanced, enlightened sense of community!

The Scholarship Search

Thousands of scholarships and fellowships are awarded to college students every year. Unlike student loans, students do not have to pay back scholarships when they have been awarded. Generally, students receive scholarships for academic, athletic or artistic talent. Scholarships are also given to students who have a special academic interest, who are members of an underrepresented group or who demonstrate financial need.

Many students don't realize just how many scholarships are available for the taking. November is National Scholarship Month. Here are two free resources we gathered from www.finaid.org/scholarships that you can share with your student for conducting his own scholarship search:

- FastWeb Scholarship Search (www.fastweb.com) is the largest, most accurate and most frequently updated scholarship database on the Internet, according to www.finaid.org/scholarships/. If you supply them with an email address, they will notify you when new scholarships that match your profile become available.
- The College Board's FUND FINDER scholarship database (http://apps.collegeboard.com/cbsearch_ss/welcome.jsp) annually updates its list of scholarships and other types of financial aid programs from more than 3,000 national, state, public and private sources.

Also encourage your student to head over to the career center to see what additional resources they have available to students. Many college students forget that the career center offers services beyond just preparing for graduate school and the post-college job search. Career counselors are well versed in helping students at every stage of the college experience, including pointing them to great scholarship resources.

