



Supporting Your Child and Our Student

**PARTNERING WITH FAMILIES THROUGH
THEIR CHILD'S ADAPTATION TO COLLEGE &
ADULTHOOD.**

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OBJECTIVES

**UNDERSTAND HOW ROLES
SHIFT**

**LEARN WHAT STUDENTS ARE
EXPECTED TO MANAGE NOW**

**RECOGNIZE HOW FAMILIES [IN
ALL FORMS] INFLUENCE
STUDENT SUCCESS**

**DISCOVER WAYS FAMILIES
CAN SUPPORT THEIR
STUDENT**

THE WHOLE FAMILY

- We recognize *all* families: Parents, Grandparents, Aunts/Uncles, Siblings, Guardians, Bonus Parents, and chosen families.
- The adjustment to college means the entire family has to shift.
- Our approach is inclusive, and we strive to be culturally responsive.



SHARED PARTNERSHIP

- This journey involves the student, the family, & UMBC
- They are still your child, but now they are our student.
- This is a partnership, not a replacement.
 - Although we care about every student, we are NOT parents to our students



CHANGING ROLES

- **Family: From Manager to Mentor**
- **University: Educator, Coach & Support**
- **Student: Learner, Self-Advocate, and Emerging Adult.**



WHAT'S DIFFERENT NOW: PRIVACY

- **Your student now holds their own records.** Under FERPA (grades) and HIPAA (health & counseling), UMBC generally cannot share academic or medical information without their written permission.
- **This is not a wall — it builds independence.** Privacy is what makes self-advocacy real.
- **The best path to information is your student.** Ask them directly and encourage them to sign a release if they want you involved.
- **Safety is the exception.** In a genuine emergency or safety concern, we act.



BECOMING A COLLEGE STUDENT

- A period marked by identity exploration, independence, and personal growth.
- Building new adult habits: relationships, schedules, & responsibilities.
- Less structured time and more choices about how to use time.



STRESS IN COLLEGE

- Every student experiences stress differently. What feels manageable to one may feel overwhelming to another.
- Common Sources of stress in college:
 - Academic Demands
 - Managing Time
 - New Social Environments
 - Living away from home.
 - Financial concerns.
 - Accessing and managing health or mental health.



HEALTHY STRESS

Temporary worry before exams or deadlines.

Feeling nervous about making friends or speaking up in class.

Juggling new responsibilities but still finding moments of joy or success.

A return to baseline after the stressor passes



UNHEALTHY STRESS

- Ongoing exhaustion, difficulty getting out of bed, or poor sleep.
- Isolation from friends, family, or campus activities.
- Panic attacks, frequent crying, or intense anxiety.
- Feeling hopeless or worthless.
- Changes in hygiene, eating habits, or academic performance



OFFER HELP WHEN:

- **Signs of distress: drastic behavior changes, prolonged withdrawal, hopelessness**
- **Serious Mental Health or Safety Concern**
- **When your student is unable to self-advocate effectively**
- **When your students asks for help**



HOW FAMILIES CAN SUPPORT:

- Stay Connected
- Ask-open ended questions
- Support Learning
- Maintain traditions while embracing change
- Encourage help-seeking when needed
- Share wisdom



WAYS TO HELP

- **Normalize stress**
 - “Do you feel more stressed than usual? I remember when you felt stressed out in the past. Is this different?”
- **Listen without fixing**
 - “Do you want me to listen or help you make a plan?”
- **Encourage balance**
 - Ask about sleep, friends, exercise, and rest
- **Promote campus resources**
 - “Do you think you should speak to someone in Academic Support?”
- **Celebrate effort**
 - “I know it has been hard and you have been a great person and a great first year/transfer student.”

 The Stress Continuum: Understanding Student Stress**GREEN**

HEALTHY ZONE. MOTIVATING, MANAGEABLE STRESS.

YELLOW

TOLERABLE. NOTICEABLE DISCOMFORT. STILL ABLE TO COPE

ORANGE

UNHEALTHY. INTENSE. NOT MANAGED WELL.

RED

DISTRESS. MAY NOT BE FUNCTIONING EFFECTIVELY.

WHERE TO TURN FOR SUPPORT

- **Retriever Integrated Health (RIH) — 410-455-2542** Medical care plus free, confidential counseling at the Center for Well-Being.
- **Retriever Essentials** Free food pantry and basic-needs support.
- **In a crisis — call or text 988, anytime.** On campus, UMBC Police: 410-455-5555. Off campus, 911.



finals tips

Growth Takes Time

Be present

Know Your Campus Resources

You're role is changing but it is still powerful



Unlocking Potential. Transforming Lives.



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The mission of the Division of Student Affairs is to foster a supportive, inclusive, and engaged campus community where every student can achieve their full potential.