



a newsletter for parents & families

April 2015

Seasonal 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:

- Some students lose their motivation for the final push
- Spring fever hits and problems arise as students become restless
- Anticipating the end of the year
- Frustration and confusion develop because of class registration
- Papers and exams pile up
- Summer job panic
- Concerns about moving home for the summer

Dealing with End-of-the-Year Conflict

At this time of year, nerves can fray and tempers can flare, as emotions and stress toy with our better judgment. To help your daughter deal positively with end-of-the-year conflict and anxiety, consider sharing these simple tips...

Check Your Reactions. Do you fly off the handle when your neighbor plays her music too loud? Do you yell at your roommate for waking you up? You're certainly entitled to your reactions. Just be sure you're not *overreacting* due to pent up stress. The old adage of counting to 10 before opening your mouth holds a lot of wisdom. You're less likely to say something you'll regret.

Don't Burn Bridges. Sure, telling someone off who has been bugging you has a certain appeal. Yet, burning that bridge can easily backfire, as that person may know someone in a leadership position or a potential employer. And when what you've said is taken out of context in a retelling, *you* will look like the bad guy.



Preserve Relationships. If you do get upset and react badly, apologize quickly and genuinely. None of us are perfect and there are going to be some relationship missteps. Your actions after the fact can make a world of difference in preserving a relationship. Ignoring it is cowardly. Facing it is true.

Don't Turn to Alcohol. Getting intoxicated sometimes feels like a quick fix, yet our reactions under the influence are rarely pretty. Anxiety and anger can come out in destructive ways like vandalism, getting in fights, and putting others and ourselves in dangerous positions when inhibitions are down.

Know Your Tipping Point

Chances are that you're in tune with issues that trigger your anger and push your buttons. So, avoid those conflicts when possible. And, if you can't, have a strategy that keeps you from exploding, whether it's taking a few deep breaths, walking away or telling yourself, "It's *not* worth it."

Spring Safety Smarts

This spring, as the weather warms and students may be inclined to “let loose,” here are some safety tips to help them keep in mind...

Alcohol Temptations. Drinking is often associated with warm weather fun. Yet, there’s certainly the underage issue for everyone to consider. Plus, for those who are of legal drinking age, they may be tempted to provide alcohol to underage students, putting them in a social host position that comes with multiple liability concerns. When it comes to alcohol,

Keeping a Clear Head

It’s important to keep a clear head by not being under the influence of alcohol or other drugs during spring celebrations. That leads to more enjoyment, the ability to look after friends and staying out of harm’s way.

students need to be smart on many levels and keep their wits about them so they don’t make bad decisions.

Warm Weather Smarts. It’s important to stay hydrated, to wear sunscreen, to don a hat for sun protection and to take it easy exertion-wise so heat stroke or heat exhaustion don’t strike. When doing a service project outside, playing sports or just hanging out, these warm weather issues can sneak up quickly as the sun beats down.

Crowd Hopping. Whether students are at a festival or a concert, it takes a heightened sense of awareness to stay safe in a crowd. Let them know that it’s important to keep their money/wallet in a front pocket so that it’s harder to lift. Leaving personal items of value to mark a spot – such as a phone in a sweatshirt pocket – is also asking for it to walk away. And keeping a clear head is key so your



daughter is prepared for any “What ifs?” that come with unpredictable crowds.

Trusting Strangers. Wise students look out for friends, don’t accept drinks from strangers, are careful about being alone with unknown people and don’t walk by themselves at night. Remind students to look out for one another and *not* put themselves in dangerous positions.

For all these warnings, it is possible for students to enjoy the spring as long as they stay smart, keep their heads and look out for one another.

Staying Safe While You're in College Doesn't Have to be Complicated

by David Ferber, CSM Director of Safety & Security

As a Campus Safety expert, my job as the Director of Safety and Security at College of Saint Mary is to provide information that is realistic. What I know from talking to college-aged students and their parents over the past six years is that young women don't think anything will happen to them. Until it does! Or, until it happens to someone close to them. Or, even a student at their university. College is a turning point in the relationship between a parent and student. As you and your daughter transition, we encourage you to use these talking points to start conversations about your daughter's well-being on campus.

Discuss with your daughter how alcohol/drug use can compromise an individual's ability to make safe decisions. It is key that students be in control of themselves at all times. Not only should they be aware of their own safety, but they should also deter their

friends from engaging in high-risk behavior.

Remind your daughter not to venture out alone off-campus at night, especially in un-lit areas. She should think about having a plan in place regarding how she will be getting from one location to another. For example, confirming plans with a friend, which can be on the "look-out" for her.

Urge your daughter to minimize the use of a cell phone while walking off-campus. Smart phone theft (like iPhones) is one of the fastest growing property crimes in the United States today. Thieves target victims for the value of their phones and students can be easily distracted while conversing or texting while they are walking around the mall or downtown.

Remind your daughter that the CSM Safety and Security Department provides a Safe Walk Service 24 hours a day seven days a week. Students may

request a Safe Walk by calling the Safety and Security Department by dialing “1” on any campus phone or their cell phones at 402-670-8848.

Encourage your daughter to attend a Crime Prevention Session offered by the Safety and Security Department. During these sessions, your daughter will learn about fire safety, personal safety, bystander intervention, as well as useful information on how to react during a tornado or active shooter situation.

If you have any questions regarding safety and security at CSM, please feel free to contact me at 402-399-2319 or by email at dferber@csm.edu. Let's continue to work together to keep your daughters safe.



Stress-Busting Tips to Share

Your daughter is in the midst of a pretty stressful time, as the year winds to a close. Here are some stress-busting tips to share.

Think & Plan Ahead. Consider what you can do today to reduce your stress tomorrow. Maybe it's picking out your clothes the night before or planning your week's schedule in advance. Or it could involve organizing your computer desktop and filing papers quickly, so things are easy to find when you need them.

Steer Clear of Negative Talk. While it's easy to complain and dwell in negativity sometimes, it doesn't do a whole lot of good and can sap your energy. So, steer clear of those who want to engage in "complaint fests" and be the most positive person you can be.

Assess the Situation. What causes you stress? *Who* causes you stress? If you can't turn the situation or relationship into a positive experience, then commit to avoiding it and/or changing your attitude toward that person or situation.

Tap into Your Support System. It's easier to be less stressed if you surround yourself with supportive, positive people. Which friends and family members serve this purpose for you? And how can you return the favor?

Just Say "No." It's easy to say "yes" too many times, and get overwhelmed in the process. Saying "no" is okay too. You can agree to help out or contribute to something, but only if you can fit it into your overall schedule. An occasional "no" can keep things on an even keel.

Laugh Regularly. Finding humor in everyday situations and taking every chance to laugh can do you an endless amount of good. They don't call laughter "internal jogging" for nothing! And your perspective is clearer and calmer when you're viewing some things through a filter of humor.

Use Nature as a Natural Stress Reliever. Take a stroll outside. Leave the library and do homework on a bench outdoors. Walk as you catch up with a friend. Just being outdoors will lower your stress and give you a new view on life.

Exercise and Eat Well. How you treat your body will determine how it responds when things aren't going well. Exercise regularly, choose a healthy diet and get enough sleep. If you do these things, your body will cope with stress much more effectively.

Don't Try to Control the Uncontrollable. Things we have no control over sometimes cause stress. So practice accepting some things as they are and moving on. Analyzing how or why something happened, that you couldn't and still can't change, will only increase stress levels.

Students don't need us to lecture them on releasing stress – that only causes more stress! Instead, gently remind your daughter of some simple stress relief techniques that can help her deal with specific issues. And if you see her turning to unhealthy coping mechanisms, like alcohol, other drugs and more, encourage her to call CSM's free counseling assistance program at 402-398-5566 to speak to a licensed counselor, or to talk with another trusted adult on campus. Beating stress in healthy ways *is* possible.



Want to Stay Stressed?

- Personalize all criticism
- Break off all friendships
- Eat anything you want



- Never exercise
- View everything as extreme
- Make more promises than you can keep
- Never ask for help
- Forget your sense of humor
- Become a workaholic
- Discard all time management skills
- Get very little sleep
- Break all boundaries
- Procrastinate
- Worry about things you can't change
- Set impossible standards
- View all challenges as problems
- Never take time off

What's Happening in the Halls?



The Mothers Living & Learning community and the MOMs student organization sponsored an Easter Egg Hunt for children on Friday, March 27. Over 400 eggs were hidden and the children enjoyed candy, prizes, and pizza at the event!

Room Draw (Housing Selection for the upcoming 2015-2016 Academic Year) will take place for

Lozier on Monday, April 13th at 9 PM and for Madonna on Tuesday, April 14th at 7 PM. Residents should be thinking about who they'd like their roommate to be, if they're eligible for a single room, and where they would like to live.

The televisions in the Lozier basement were mounted to the walls in January thanks to Residence Hall Council (RHC). Residents have been enjoying the new change and Residence Life hosts Saturday Cinema by showing a movie every Saturday night at 7 PM!

Health and Safety Checks have been occurring throughout March in Lozier. Resident Advisors and Lozier Hall Director, Kate Branstetter, have been completing the checks for fire and safety hazards. If your student has a question about one of our policies, please refer them to the 2014-2015 Residence Life Handbook that was sent to them electronically in August. We can provide them with another copy if they need it! Ultimately, residents are responsible for knowing and abiding by Residence Life policies and procedures.

Residence Life is sponsoring a program on sexual assault awareness and education on **Wednesday, April 8th at 9 PM in the Madonna Conference Room**. This is an important topic as 1 in 5 women are victims of attempted or completed sexual assault while in college. Please encourage your student to attend!

Some upcoming educational programs this month:

- * Tattoos in a Work Setting: What Do They Mean?
- * Mirror, Mirror: Beauty and Self-Acceptance
- * One-on-One Walks to Discuss Spirituality

CSM Dates to Remember:

- * **Monday, March 30 to Friday, April 10: Course Registration begins for Fall 2015**
- * **Wednesday, April 1 to Thursday, April 2: Tennis vs. Bethany College**
- * **Friday, April 3 to Monday, April 6: Easter Break, No Classes**
- * **Tuesday, April 7: Tennis vs. Central Christian College**
- * **Friday, April 10: Last Day to Withdraw from Day/Evening/Weekend Classes**
- * **Wednesday, April 15: Softball vs. Bellevue University**

- * **Thursday, April 16: Spirit of Service Day**
- * **Saturday, April 18: Softball vs. Waldorf College**
- * **Wednesday, April 22: Campus Ministry Spring Fling Sale**
- * **Sunday, April 26: Softball vs. York College**
- * **Monday, April 27: Spring Career Fair**
- * **Wednesday, April 29: Student Scholars' Day, No Classes**



Greetings from the Vice President for Student Development!

Dear Families:

I try to share information in this newsletter that might be helpful and fun for you, to increase your awareness of issues and resources, as well as share topics you may want to communicate about with your daughter. For those of you who shared input with me through the March newsletter survey, thank you! One addition to this month's newsletter from your suggestions is "What's Happening in the halls?" so I hope you enjoy it.

Have a great Easter!

Sincerely,

Tara Knudson Carl, Ph.D.

