

Transition to Higher Education A Resource for Parents/Carers

Parents and carers are a key source of stability in a young person's life. This stability is particularly important during their transition to higher education, when many overwhelming changes are taking place.

This guide considers how parents/carers can best support their child during the transition to higher education, including; promoting independence and self-discovery, providing emotional support and ensuring they are also looking after themselves during this process.

Preparing for University



Below are helpful resources from 'Student Minds' and 'Studential' to help preparing for university. You may also want to signpost your child to these websites:

- <https://www.studentminds.org.uk/knowbeforeyougo.html>

Know Before You Go is an e-resource that is intended for Year 12-13 students, and the educators who support you, as you transition from school/college to university. This life skills resource helps you to anticipate, identify and navigate situations you will encounter when entering higher education. It contains information on many topics including paying bills, study skills, housemate issues, identity questions and embedded throughout is how to maintain good mental health and seek help as needed.

- <https://www.studentminds.org.uk/transitionintouniversity.html>

This resource is here to help you be successful on campus, focusing on time management, relationships, identity, finances, sexual activity, mental illness, suicide and addictions and more. It also includes tips and strategies for helping students through challenging times and recommendations of where to go to get additional help, if needed.

- <https://www.studentminds.org.uk/supportforafriend.html>

The '[support for a friend](https://www.studentminds.org.uk/supportforafriend.html)' page, although not specific to parents, may contain information that is useful to you.



- <https://www.studential.com/university/freshers-week-guide-2020>

Guides on what to pack for university, cooking, freshers' week, budgeting, council tax and more.

How to Best Support my Child from a Distance

This can be one of the hardest areas; seeing your children head off to university. It can be a very fine line of not getting too involved but still wanting to let them know that you are there for them when they might need you. See some top tips from **Young Minds** below:

1. Touch base regularly, maybe set a regular day/time for checking-in.
2. Watch and listen for signs that they might be struggling, such as anything unusual in the way they normally communicate, an impression of low mood or seeming not to be enjoying things.
3. Encourage them to get involved at the earliest opportunity. If they're nervous about socialising, remind them that everyone will be in the same boat and will all be wanting to make friends. They could look into societies or clubs that they are interested in, social events or make plans with housemates to get to know one another. Making connections and interacting with others can help them feel more part of the university, course or company and it will build a support network around them too.
4. As parents, do not expect the university to get in touch with you if they have any concerns, universities often strive for independence in young people.
5. Try to encourage them not to compare their experience with others. There may be a lot of photos placed on social media capturing 'Freshers' week'. Encourage them to enjoy their own experiences and not to become worried about what others are doing. Equally, there will be a range of academic abilities and skills amongst their peers and colleagues. Reassure them that they have worked hard to get to where they are and are just as capable as anyone else.
6. Remind them to keep tutors and supervisors aware if there are any problems or difficulties that they are experiencing. They can help to put support into place or extend deadlines.

Support my Child can Access at University



Universities have a range of different services to support student wellbeing.

Visit the university's website to find out what specific support is available. This might include counselling, student advice services, support networks as well as other

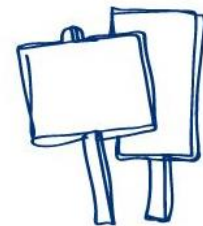
resources. Many Universities have active Student Unions which may also offer support to students.

➤ **Nightline**

<https://www.nightline.ac.uk/about-nightlines/> - A student listening service which is open at night and run by students for students. Every night of term, trained student volunteers answer calls, emails, instant messages, texts and talk in person to their fellow university students about anything that's troubling them. As the Nightline volunteers are fellow students, they can directly empathise with their callers' problems.

Support in the Local Community

- GP: you will be able to find contact details of your local GP surgery on their website.
- Local Mind: <https://www.mind.org.uk/>
- Victims Support: <https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/>
- Citizens Advice: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>
- Talking Therapies (IAPT) services



Useful Wellbeing Resources for Young People

➤ **Mood Zone**

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/> - Mood Zone. It offers practical advice, interactive tools, videos and audio guides to help you feel mentally and emotionally better. Mood self-assessment.

➤ **Northumberland NHS**

<https://web.ntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/> - This website has free to download self-help leaflets, including resources on anxiety, depression, anger, and self-harm.

➤ **Get Connected – The Mix**

<https://hatw.co.uk/helpline/get-connected/> - The Mix is a support service for under 25s, available 365 days a year. They're there to help you take on any challenge you're facing – from mental health to money, from homelessness to finding a job, from break-ups to drugs.

➤ **Kooth**

<https://www.kooth.com/> - Free, safe and anonymous online support for young people. Monday–Friday, 12pm–10pm

➤ **Shout**

85258 - A crisis text service. Anxious? Worried? Stressed? Get 24/7 help from our team of Crisis Volunteers.

➤ **Samaritans**

116 123 - Whatever you're going through, you can call us any time, from any phone for free.

jo@samaritans.org - Sometimes writing down your thoughts and feelings can help you understand them better. Email response within 24 hours.

Support for Parents/Carers

As a parent/carer you should ensure that you are also looking after yourself in this time of change. There are many sources of information and support available to parents and families:

➤ **Student Minds** - <https://www.studentminds.org.uk/supportforparents.html>

We recognise that for a parent, the transition of a child from school to university, can be a significant challenge. We are often approached by parents looking for further information on how they can best support their child and have captured some of the most frequently asked questions.

➤ **Young Minds**

[Young Minds Parents Helpline](#) is available to offer advice to anyone worried about a child or young person under 25. Available Mon-Fri from 9:30am to 4pm (Freephone) 0800 802 5544

➤ **Family Lives** - <https://www.familylives.org.uk/about/>

We recognise that the best way to support families is to provide professional, non-judgmental support and advice in a way that all members of the family can freely access. We provide this through our helpline, extensive advice on our website, befriending services, and parenting/relationship support groups. Nearly all our services are accessible at no charge to parents and you can contact us 365 days a year.

Please complete our short feedback survey, by following the link below:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=m2PRzsLrNkWUuWHRbLXGI9UxgkzfSKdAvjJRtOXa-zxUMINYS09UWkNETjVLQUY3MUU3VTkzWkxSRy4u>