

Top Tips for parents, carers and supportive adults of students going to university!

Keep talking By making sure the lines of communication are kept open, having honest and open conversations beforehand will help your child to know they can talk to you when they're struggling or finding student life a challenge.

Stay in touch Try to have regular times of catching up and hearing how your child is doing. This could be a phone call or 'FaceTime' on a particular day that both of you know works well. Of course it's well worth messaging in between times too just to keep that sense of connection.

Check self-care Sleep, diet and exercise all help to keep us fit and well so learning how to do this alongside studying and socialising are important! It's not just about asking if your child is getting their 5-a-day but finding out how these essentials of wellbeing make a difference to them on a daily basis.

Finding support Take a look at what services and support your child's university offers. Doing this together before they go can help them to feel prepared and informed. If issues arise you both know who you can get in touch with for help or advice.

Take an interest In the whole of your child's university life: their new roommates, lectures, seminars and social time. Find ways to encourage them to share both the highlights and the challenges so they know it's ok to be open and not have to pretend everything is 'fine'.

Grow their independence If your child is finding aspects of university life difficult, it can be easy to feel the need to offer solutions. But for them to make the transition into adulthood it can be more helpful to problem solve with them, supporting them to reach their own conclusions. This builds independence and resilience, learning along the way how to manage issues when they arise and having confidence in themselves to deal with new situations. It could be useful to consider the 'what ifs' and chat through some possible scenarios before they go.

Send care packages Receiving a surprise in the post can give your child a real boost, so whether it's their favourite snack, a voucher for a pizza restaurant, a funny card, it's a way to keep them, their uni life and home connected. It's a reminder that friends and family haven't forgotten them!

Be prayerful Take time to pause and pray for your child in all the new situations and things they find themselves in. See if there are ways to pray together over the phone or during video calls too, it doesn't have to be long but it recognises that God is with you in that moment despite physically being in different locations.

There are more links to support that is available on our webpage for students...

For youth leaders: www.methodist.org.uk/supportingstudents

For those going to uni: www.methodist.org.uk/forstudents