

## Supporting the student in your life.

Going to college is a major transition in anyone's life. It is a very exciting and positive time but involves a lot of change and adjustment, not only for the student themselves, but for their family and friends. This is often particularly true for mature students. Family and friends provide essential support for students. Below are some of the common issues students face over the first year with suggestions about how family and friends can help. It is aimed at partners/guardians/carers, partners, siblings and friends. The most important thing you can do to support a new student is to listen to them, encourage them to share their experiences and show them that they have your support.

Month	Potential experiences	What you can do to support
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Excitement about starting college, making new friends and testing new freedom.</li> <li>■ Mature students may be anxious about balancing study with other demands.</li> <li>■ Other family members may be anxious about potential changes.</li> <li>■ Anxiety about coursework demands.</li> <li>■ Anxiety about social and residential life</li> <li>■ Homesickness.</li> <li>■ Students may begin to question if they have made the right choice of course.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Encourage the student in your life to get off to the best start by attending the Induction Programme (this is essential). Let them know that you are there to listen and encourage them to discuss their experiences at college.</li> <li>■ Encourage the family/household to discuss the upcoming changes and how to manage them in a positive way.</li> <li>■ Support your student by helping them to plan their time and identify the time for study.</li> <li>■ There is plenty of support available at DkIT. Encourage the student in your life to use it. For example, attending our Study Skills tutorials can help students feel more confident about their studies and help them to achieve their potential. Getting involved with our <a href="#">Clubs and Societies</a> is a great way to meet people and become part of college life. Encourage the student in your life to consider joining one of these and to get involved with events organised by the <a href="#">Student Union</a>.</li> <li>■ Encourage homesick students to spend time on campus and get involved also suggest they speak to our support services.</li> <li>■ Encourage your student to speak to their First Year Convener and/or the <a href="#">Careers Service</a> to discuss course choices.</li> </ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Some students will be settling in and becoming involved in student life on campus very quickly. Others will take longer.</li> <li>■ Romantic relationships from home may begin to falter.</li> <li>■ Students may begin to question if they have made the right choice of course.</li> <li>■ Money/budgeting issues may arise.</li> <li>■ Problems with room-mates may occur.</li> <li>■ As winter approaches, colds and flu are common.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Listen to your student and encourage them to talk about their experiences at college.</li> <li>■ If you feel your student needs additional support encourage them to contact the DkIT <a href="#">Counselling Service</a>. Online support can be found at <a href="#">Reach Out.com</a>.</li> <li>■ Encourage your student to speak to their First Year Convener and/or the <a href="#">Careers Service</a> to discuss course choices.</li> </ul> <p>Encourage your student to speak to the <a href="#">Student Union</a> about accommodation and financial concerns. They could also seek online financial advice from <a href="#">Student Finance.ie</a> or go to <a href="#">college information</a> on the CCPC website <a href="#">www.ccpc.ie</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ If your student has moved away from home, remind them that the Student Health Service provides on-campus medical care to full time registered students but this is not a replacement for a student's own General Practitioner (G.P.). Further advice can be found on the <a href="#">Health Unit's</a> webpage.</li> <li>■ Encourage your student to eat well and keep vaccinations up-to-date (if appropriate).</li> </ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The academic workload may cause stress and/or anxiety for some. Some may be finding it difficult to juggle competing demands (e.g. home, study, work).</li> <li>■ New friendships/relationships become important.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Listen and encourage your student to discuss any concerns. Encourage them to talk about new friendships.</li> <li>■ Encourage them to attend the study skills tutorials organised by the <a href="#">Library</a> and Student Learning &amp; Development Centre (SLDC). They can arrange one-to-one support sessions with the <a href="#">SLDC</a>.</li> <li>■ Encourage them to seek support from their First year Conveners, lecturers and peers. Encourage them to contact the Counselling Service if they are finding it difficult to cope.</li> <li>■ Encourage them to attend all lectures, seminars, labs and classes.</li> </ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ For some of those who have moved to Dundalk to study, the Christmas break may be the first time they have spent an extended period at home since beginning college. This is generally a very happy time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Encourage your student to take a break from study and to relax.</li> <li>■ Encourage them to get plenty of sleep and to eat well.</li> <li>■ Take the opportunity to discuss the first term with them and listen supportively to what they say.</li> <li>■ Discuss rules, boundaries and increased freedom (if</li> </ul>

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	<p>but sometimes conflicts may arise over boundaries, new habits and opinions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anxiety and stress related to the exams.</li> </ul>	<p>appropriate).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage your student to attend the Exam Technique Tutorials offered by the SLDC.</li> </ul>
<b>January</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There may be some anxiety about leaving family and friends to return to college for the exam period. Pressure of exams may cause stress and anxiety.</li> <li>Homesickness and loneliness can resurface. Short days and long nights can compound this.</li> <li>Some students may be disappointed with their exam results.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage your student to seek support from the <a href="#">Counselling Service</a> and academic support from the <a href="#">SLDC</a>.</li> <li>Encourage your student to use the facilities of the <a href="#">DkIT Sport Fitness Centre and Sports Arena</a> and join one of the many <a href="#">Clubs and Societies</a> in DkIT also suggest they speak to our support services.</li> <li>Encourage your student to attend their Exam Consultations. These are 1:1 discussions with lecturers. An <a href="#">explanation of the results</a> and further information regarding examinations, online results and repeat examinations can be found on the <a href="#">Examinations</a> webpage.</li> <li>If your student is disappointed or concerned with their grades encourage them to contact their First-Year Convener, or any other lecturer and/or to contact the SLDC.</li> </ul>
<b>February</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Semester 2 brings new modules and new demands.</li> <li>Concerns about course choice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk to your student about their studies and listen supportively. Encourage them to seek academic advice and support from their First Year Convenors, the Student Learning &amp; Development Centre or the Counselling Service.</li> <li>Encourage your student to speak to their First Year Convener and/or the <a href="#">Careers Service</a> to discuss course choices.</li> </ul>
<b>March</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial concerns may resurface.</li> <li>Your student may be stressed or anxious as the academic workload increases. Some students may be coping with competing demands and this may lead to conflict within the family/household.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage your student to speak to the <a href="#">Student Union</a> or seek online advice from <a href="#">Student Finance.ie</a> or <a href="#">CCPC</a></li> <li>Encourage your student to attend the study skills tutorials organised by the <a href="#">Library</a> and Student Learning &amp; Development Centre. They can arrange one-to-one support sessions with the <a href="#">SLDC</a>.</li> <li>Encourage members of the family/household to discuss concerns in a positive and constructive way and to listen to each other. If you feel your student needs additional support encourage them to seek this from the <a href="#">Counselling Service</a>. Online support can be found at <a href="#">Reach Out.com</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>April</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The end of the first year is approaching, your student may be anxious and stressed about the end-of-year exams.</li> <li>Students may be concerned about finding accommodation for next year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage your student to attend the study skills tutorials organised by the <a href="#">Library</a> and Student Learning &amp; Development Centre. They can arrange one-to-one support sessions with the <a href="#">SLDC</a>.</li> <li>The <a href="#">Student Union</a> can offer advice on finding accommodation.</li> </ul>
<b>May</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>End of term pressure and examination stress.</li> <li>Sadness with leaving new friends and relationships.</li> <li>Realisation that the past year has changed them.</li> <li>Your student may start to explore career options.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen supportively to your student and encourage them to be open about any concerns. Encourage them to avail of the many supports available at DkIT.</li> <li>Celebrate their achievements over the past year. Encourage them to reflect on the past year and how they can use this experience to help them in year 2.</li> <li>Encourage your student to get meaningful work over the summer to support their career choice/finance their studies. The Career Service can give useful CV advice and job hunting tips. They could also plan to attend the <a href="#">Gradireland Summer Fair</a></li> </ul>

### Useful Websites

DkIT SLDC [www.dkit.ie/student-learning-development-centre](http://www.dkit.ie/student-learning-development-centre)  
 DkIT Health Unit [www.dkit.ie/student-services/health-unit](http://www.dkit.ie/student-services/health-unit)  
 DkIT Sport [www.dkit.ie/sports-societies/sports-facilities](http://www.dkit.ie/sports-societies/sports-facilities)  
 DkIT Examinations [www.dkit.ie/examinations-office](http://www.dkit.ie/examinations-office)  
 Reach Out <http://ie.reachout.com/college>  
 DkIT Counselling Service [www.dkit.ie/counselling-services-dkit](http://www.dkit.ie/counselling-services-dkit)

DkIT Careers Service [www.dkit.ie/careers-office](http://www.dkit.ie/careers-office)  
 DkIT Students Union [www.dkitsu.ie](http://www.dkitsu.ie)  
 DkIT Library [www.dkit.ie/dkit-library](http://www.dkit.ie/dkit-library)  
 Student Finance [www.studentfinance.ie](http://www.studentfinance.ie)  
 Grad Ireland [www.gradireland.com](http://www.gradireland.com)

(Please note the Counselling Service can only communicate with the student they cannot communicate directly with parents.)

National Consumer Agency to Competition & Consumer Protection Commission <https://www.ccpc.ie/>

