

PARENT/STUDENT WISE CHOICES GUIDE

12th Grade Conversation

OBJECTIVE

Have a conversation with your teen about the importance of wise choices at college and the impact our choices have for us now and also for the future. Also, talk about the importance of plugging into a campus ministry and a local church. Help your teen connect to the campus ministry and local church.

THE 411

Our teens are getting ready for a big transition in life: leaving home and heading off to college. For the past 17-18 years, they have been preparing for this moment. When they made mistakes during these years, we were there to teach, train, coach and mentor them through life. However, soon they will be apart and making choices on their own without our supervision. This is good and natural. They are in the process of becoming adults. College is a time when they move more toward independence and maturity. However, the pressures that come with the college years can make for a time of many regrets and consequences from poor decisions. This is a great time to continue to coach them in why making wise decisions impacts not only today but the future – their future.

In college it is so easy to stay in the dorm bubble and not plug into a campus ministry or local church. Their spiritual life will grow only by connecting to a great community in a campus house and local church in which to worship or serve. Some campus houses can connect them to a church as well. Here is a great website where you can look for a campus ministry on any college: www.liveabove.com/default.aspx. Look for the ministry and call the point person. Usually these point leaders will call your teen and try to reach out and help him get connected.

Have your teen sample some local churches in the area or have a pastor provide some recommendations for some good churches. You can always look on the Internet for more information on the church.

SUGGESTION

As you make college visits, take the opportunity to have the discussion about making wise choices. What a great time as you are walking in the dorms and around campus to remind your teen that his choices and decisions matter. He has an opportunity to be an influencer and not to be influenced into make poor choices. On your visit, you could always line up a time to meet up with the campus house ministry leader. Here are some ideas of discussion topics as you walk around campus and on the drive home.

DISCUSSION

WALKING AROUND CAMPUS AND IN THE DORMS:



ASK:

What are you most excited about being at college? What excites you most about college?

What is your biggest fear about being at college?

As you look around this campus, what excites you the most?

Take a seat on a bench in the courtyard if you can.

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: We have talked through the years about choices and making wise decisions. I just want you to know that I am so excited for you. College is a great time in life. I know you are going to do great, and I will always be there for you.

In college you will be surrounded by professors and other students who will have different viewpoints and beliefs than you. You will be tempted in every way. I just want to encourage you to think through things and to make wise choices.

The wisest choice you will have here at college will be which community you connect with. I want to encourage you to really pray about that. It's your choice. However, the community you connect with or the friends you associate with are big choices. Before you arrive on this campus I want you to think through this, so that when you arrive here on campus this next fall you have an idea of what community you desire to connect with.

I pray that you will connect with those that love God and want to be influencers for Christ here on this campus. You can either be influenced by others and make poor choices, or you can influence others by loving them, serving them and standing up for what is right.

But college is a tough place to do that alone. You need that community of believers.

ASK: What type of community would you need to be spiritually encouraged?
Could you find that here on this campus?
Will that play a role in choosing this college?

ON THE WAY HOME:

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: I have been so proud of you, and I am so excited for you next year. I believe in you and that not only can you do great at school but I believe you can make a difference at college for Christ. However, just like when a glass of water is poured out, it can only pour so much before it runs out and is empty. To pour more it has to be filled. In the same way we have to be filled spiritually so we can pour out. That is why it is so important to find the community of believers who can encourage and challenge us. That is why worshiping at a church and campus ministry is so important, so that we can be encouraged and pour out to others by serving. My prayer and desire is that you find that community at college.

PRAY: Pray together that your teen will find that in college and make it a priority.

