



SET TO GO

A JED PROGRAM

STANDARD COLLEGE TRANSITION NIGHT FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

This workshop/presentation reviews basic information to families (students and parents) about things to consider before entering their freshmen year of college.

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- | SLIDE | SUGGESTED SCRIPT AND ACTIONS (ITALICIZED TEXT INDICATES SUGGESTED SCRIPT) |
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| 1. | <p><i>Welcome everyone! Thank you for being here today. My name is _____a and I am____ [give information you think may be interesting or necessary for the audience to know and/or why you're leading this workshop/presentation]. The Jed Foundation is a nonprofit organization based in New York City that exists to protect emotional health and suicide for teens and young adults. The organization put together this presentation to educate both incoming college first-year students and their families about mental health and some things to prepare/think about when transitioning to college and adult life.</i></p> |
| 2. | <p>Read these statistics out loud to the audience.</p> <p>You could ask afterwards: <i>“Raise your hand if you find any of these statistics surprising.”</i></p> <p>Ask people to volunteer to explain what they find surprising and ask the students specifically to share their reactions to these stats.</p> |
| 3. | <p><i>We're going to watch a short video now that captures different students' perspectives on the transition to college that gives helpful insights and advice. It was developed by The Jed Foundation in partnership with WebMD.</i></p> |
| 4. | <p><i>Play video.</i></p> |
| 5. | <p><i>Arriving at school is both exciting and nerve-wracking! Thinking ahead to what that arrival might look like can help ease nerves and make it all a little less scary. Saying goodbye to your family once you've finished moving in can be very emotional, and it's also very emotional for parents to leave their children.</i></p> <p>Activity: <i>If you're a student, turn to another student around you. If you're a parent, turn to another parent. Students discuss this question with each other: What's the first thing you'll do when your parents leave? For parents discuss the first thing you'll do after dropping your child off at school. Everyone has 3 minutes to discuss. Afterwards we'll share some responses.</i></p> <p>At the end of the 3 minutes, first ask parents what they plan to do. Get 2 or 3 responses. Then ask the students and try to get 2-3 responses.*</p> <p>Note to facilitators: If most of the students at your school plan on commuting to college and not living away from home, swap this slide out for the slide located in the appendix at the end of this presentation.</p> |
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6. *It's a good idea to brainstorm ahead of time some plans to take care of yourself once you're away. Think about different tactics you use to manage stress, whether that be through fitness, yoga, meditation, or other activities promoting wellness. Plan on how you're going to ensure you get enough rest, including understanding what kind of conditions and environment you need to sleep. Plan to get involved with some extra-curricular activities that are of interest to you and enjoyable that help break up your time studying or doing homework. Work with advisors and mentors on campus to get advice from them and to have people to talk to in case you or a friend is ever struggling. Managing your health on campus should be a priority, not an afterthought.*

7. *It's important to ensure that your student has a good handle on a number of independent living skills. In order to help instill these in your student, there are a couple of things you can do. First of all, you can go "on strike!" This means you should sit back a bit and let your student do a lot of the work that you may often do for them. For example, you might want to assign some household chores to your student, if you don't already, have them do their own laundry, have them cook their own meals, and have them wake themselves up with an alarm clock. In addition, if your student is thinking about going away for college but hasn't ever spent much time away from home, you might want to help them get some practice. The best way to do this is to arrange for them to spend a few nights or, even better, a few weeks away, perhaps at a relative or family friend's house or if you can, send them to a camp or other summer program away from home. You should also begin to help your student learn how to break up large tasks into more manageable, smaller components. You can help them learn some techniques for doing this and teach them about working backwards and planning ahead. These skills will be invaluable when working on larger assignments in college and beyond.*

8. *Something a lot of families don't talk about prior to college is what communication will look like once the student is living away from home. Figuring this out in advance will help families set up useful guidelines that will be especially helpful during the transition period. It's important to be flexible in your approach to this and trust your gut. What works in the first week after getting to college might look different 6 weeks in or 2 years later.*

Ask the students: *How many of you have had a conversation with your parents about what communication will look like once you're in college?*

Activity: *So, let's take some time to work on figuring that out now! Get together with your parent/student and try to answer the questions on this slide. Begin creating a communication contract you can use in college. I'll give you 5 minutes.*

9. *Although you might come up with a solid plan for communication with one another, be aware that your contact may be more frequent during the initial transition and that shouldn't necessarily be alarming or surprising.*

To create your communication contract, set some basic guidelines: read bullet points on slide starting with "What decisions and challenges do you expect your child to be able to handle alone?"

10. *It's important to understand that access to your student's information will change when he or she turns 18.*

Read slide aloud.

11. *Many college campuses have some sort of health services available to students. It's important to get familiar with what types of resources your campus offers and how to utilize them ahead of time.*

Read the questions aloud.

These questions are also included in your handout. We recommend that you spend some time in the coming days and weeks researching them and getting more familiar with your school's health resources.

12. *Many college campuses have some sort of mental health services available to students. It's important to get familiar with what types of resources your campus offers and how to utilize them ahead of time.*

Read the questions aloud.

These questions are also included in your handout. We recommend that you spend some time in the coming days and weeks researching them and getting more familiar with your school's mental health resources. If you know your child will need mental health services on campus, it's especially important to fully understand what the campus does and does not offer relative to your child's needs.

13. *Students who already have a diagnosed mental health or other known health condition and currently receive care should think about the following questions before arriving to campus:*

Read questions aloud.

These questions are also included in your handout. The college transition can be difficult and it's wise to maintain a strong support system. If your child struggled with another transition, perhaps the transition to high school, it's important to recognize that they might also struggle with the transition out of high school and to ensure you understand what resources are available on campus to help them ahead of time.

14. *Many mental health problems have their onset during young adulthood. Due to this, you should know what steps you can take if you, a friend, or someone you know is struggling emotionally.*

Read bullet points aloud.

For the last bullet, you should recommend that students and families actually take out their cell phones and add those numbers to their contacts.

15. *A good tool to use when thinking more about how you can prepare for the transition out of high school is through the Set to Go website and resource center. The Jed Foundation provides resources and tools that help teens, young adults, and those who support them navigate this transition from high school into adulthood and college. Take some time later to browse through the website and read some of the resources that interest you.*

16. *To conclude today's session, here's a list of some things to work on, look into, and prepare for as you begin your summer before college. If possible, try to connect with a current student at your college and ask them any questions you have about what to expect, what classes to take, and really anything you want answered or are nervous about. Start thinking about things to get involved with that will keep you busy and that will help you meet other people and pursue your interests. Look into health and mental health services on campus and get familiar with what is offered.*

17. To stay up to date on the Set to Go program and be alerted about new resources, sign up for the email list at settogo.org/email

18. See if anyone has any questions.

19. Thank you for participating in this session. We hope that you use this information to help yourself prepare for the transition to college! For more information and resources, visit [The Jed Foundation website](http://TheJedFoundation.org) and settogo.org.

Appendix

Note to facilitators: Swap this slide out for slide 5 in this presentation if most of the students at your school plan on commuting to college and not living away from home.

The first day of college will likely be both exciting and nerve-wracking! Thinking ahead to what that might look like can help ease nerves and make it all a little less scary. It can also be very emotional for parents to see their children taking this next adult step.

Activity: If you're a student, turn to another student around you. If you're a parent, turn to another parent. Students, discuss this question with each other: *How do you think you'll feel on your first day of college?* For parents discuss how you think you'll feel on your child's first day of their college career. Everyone has 3 minutes to discuss. Afterwards we'll share some responses.

At the end of the 3 minutes, first ask parents what they plan to do. Get 2 or 3 responses. Then ask the students and try to get about 2-3 responses.