

WELCOME TO THE CONCORDIA FAMILY!

Whether your students are entering freshmen or transfer students, the first year at Concordia will be an exciting, challenging, and transforming experience for both you and your students. Adjustment to Concordia is an ongoing process and each academic semester poses new situations, both positive and negative. As parents, you will need to provide support and encouragement to your students and assist in their development as adults by giving them more decision-making responsibilities.

Concordia University Irvine values its partnerships with parents as we strive to work together to ensure our students develop into wise, honorable, and cultivated students. To develop this partnership, we want to equip you with helpful advice and strategies you can use when fostering your students' growth.

Reinforce your student's independence but **be open and honest about your values and expectations** for your student. Keep communication open and express your support as your student transitions to Concordia.

Remind your student to **prioritize their health, nutrition, and overall wellness**. Students who do not set limits risk exhaustion and illness often resulting in poor grades.

Encourage your student to make **smart choices about alcohol, drugs, and relationships**. Your student may be concerned about "fitting in" and may need your understanding. Listen openly to your student's concerns and questions.

Do not overreact to those **first frantic telephone calls**. Listen carefully and try to determine how best to address your student's need at that moment. Do not panic! Generating choices with your student conveys that you care and also puts the responsibility on him or her for follow-up. **Do not look for a quick fix**. There is not one.

To help with **homesickness**, remind your student that the Residential Education & Services Staff can be especially helpful. Encourage your student to seek out ways to become more involved with student clubs and campus activities in order to meet new people and feel more comfortable with their new environment. Suggest staying on campus on the weekends rather than having your student consistently come home.

It is important to remember that **students need to fight their own battles**. The situation can become more complicated when parents get involved.

If your child is ready to change a major or drop a course because of a poor grade on a first test, urge him/her not to overreact. Suggest talking to the professor. It is extremely beneficial for students to **develop relationships with their professors**, not only to seek options on how to do well in their classes but also to seek mentoring and counseling for post-college opportunities.

Place the responsibility on your student for connecting with resources at the first sign of academic trouble. Students should reach out to **Concordia's student support services**, such as the Office of Learning Services (time management, study skills, tutors) and academic advisors.

If your student shares some concerns with you, do not get into **the trap of blaming the professor**. Ask questions to see the bigger picture. Help your student break down a large problem into smaller, more manageable issues. Identifying tasks that address each concern will help your student feel more in control of the situation.

Encourage your student to take responsibility for their actions. Making choices and living with the consequences; whether good or bad, can be empowering. College is the time for students to **discover their identity** as they encounter new experiences that may challenge their decision making.

Source:: Ingram, Wanda Johnson and MacKay, Jacqueline Kiernan. 'Let the Journey Begin: A Parent's Monthly Guide to the College Experience.' Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002.

“Commissioned by Christ...developing our students into wise, honorable, and cultivated citizens.”



Concordia University Irvine's Support System

Students who are struggling can seek assistance from:

- the Counseling Center
- the Office of Learning & Disability Services
- Academic advisors
- Office of First-Year Experience Programs & Initiatives
- Peer Tutoring
- the Writing Center
- the Health Center
- Office of Career Development Services
- Residential Education & Services Staff
- Faculty and staff members
- Campus Pastor
- Dean of Student Affairs
- Student Affairs Staff

Our campus is committed to serving your students and assisting them in their success here at Concordia. Please encourage your student to seek help rather than dealing with their struggles alone. We will not be able to serve him/her unless your student takes the initiative to reach out. Advise your student to be proactive and develop relationships with some of the support systems early on in the semester rather than waiting until problems have escalated.

FERPA

Concordia University Irvine recognizes its partnership with parents and families. As students transition to CUI, the University encourages parents to continue their support of their students and works with parents in developing students into responsible adults. Concordia also values the students' privacy rights.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal Law that protects the privacy of a student's educational records. These records include student information relating to academic, housing, financial aid, student account, or disciplinary file. Rights transfer to the student upon reaching 18 years of age OR attending any school beyond the secondary level. Therefore, school officials will not be able to disclose information regarding those listed records to you.

Parents can have access to their students' information ONLY if their student is willing to release that information to them. Students must complete a Student Consent for Release of Records each time information is to be released. Please visit the Registrar's Office website for further information and/or to access appropriate forms.

What Can I Do?

As parents, we would like you to share this information with your sons and daughters.

Important Dates:

August 23	Residence halls open for NEW students
August 27	Instruction begins
Oct. 5-Nov. 13	Advising Appointments
Oct. 15-16	Midterm Break
Dec. 14-18	Final Exam Week
Jan. 20	Instruction begins
Mar. 8-Apr. 16	Advising Appointments
Mar. 1-5	Midterm/Spring Break
April 1-5	Easter Break
May 7-13	Final Exam Week