

Effective Empty Nesting

At Red Raider Orientation, we discussed that, for most students, the first six weeks of college are the most challenging. What we can never emphasize enough is that the same is true for parents and family members. Here are some suggestions for actions plans to effectively cope during this time.

- Read a book from the reading list in **The Parent and Family Guide**. Time spent worrying could be more productively invested understanding and equipping yourself for the changes your student is facing. Keep the book handy and delve in each time you find yourself in a quandary.
- Keep a journal. Some people find putting their feelings, fears, and joys into written words clarifies the big picture. Use the message board available through Tech Parents!
- Change your language. Your “child” is now your “student”. Self-talk reinforces (and even shapes) our attitudes about relationships and interactions. Your student will appreciate the pride and respect this term demonstrates.
- Make a notebook, with lists of open-ended, non-judgmental questions, of questions that evoke options but don’t sound like advice, of things you are proud of about your student, of people you admire, of books you liked. Use it when the phone rings or when “you’ve got mail.”
- Talk with another parent or family member of a Texas Tech student. It helps to share experiences, and find reassurance. Use the online message board at www.parent.ttu.edu, join a Tech Parents chapter in your area, or contact us at 1-888-888-7409 or parent@ttu.edu.
- Read THE DAILY TOREADOR student newspaper at <http://www.dailytoreador.com/> or Texas Tech Today at www.today.ttu.edu to keep abreast of what’s happening on campus. It’s a good way to feel connected and stay informed while respecting your student’s new territory.
- Volunteer! Helping someone else makes a difference, and makes our problems seem smaller.
- Renew a relationship, with your spouse, a friend, a distant family member.
- Focus on the future by making plans to attend Family Weekend 2011 in Lubbock. Visualize the changes you look forward to seeing through your student’s eyes.