

**Promoting
Autonomy in a
World of
Over-Parenting**

GREAT LAKES

Student Satisfaction or Dissatisfaction with Parents' Level of Involvement in College Search

Satisfaction Level	Percentage
Want more involvement	28%
OK with level of involvement	57%
Want less involvement	6%
Don't know or no answer	9%

Source: studentpoll survey

GREAT LAKES

Helicopter Parent

Behavior	Percentage
Obtaining information on company	40%
Submitting resume on behalf of student	31%
Promoting son/daughter for position	26%
Attending career fairs	17%
Complaining if company does not hire son/daughter	15%
Making interview arrangements	12%
Negotiating salary and benefits	9%
Advocating for promotions/salary increases	6%
Attending the interview	4%

Source: Michigan State University, Collegiate Employment Research Institute, Deseret News Graphic

GREAT LAKES

Parental Involvement



33% of millennials today say their parents are very involved in their job hunt process



One in 10 say their parents have accompanied them to job interviews



3% of recent college graduates report that their parents have actually sat in on the interview

Source: Forbes.com



What are some of your challenges in working with helicopter parents?



Today We Will

1

Identify characteristics of a helicopter parent

2

Discuss strategies to help parents "let go"

3

Share tips and tools for schools





Characteristics of a Helicopter Parent

How do you distinguish between a helicopter parent and a parent who is concerned?

helicopter parent

noun informal
plural noun: **helicopter parents**

1. a parent who takes an overprotective or excessive interest in the life of their child or children
2. "some college officials see all this as the behavior of an overindulged generation, raised by helicopter parents and lacking in resilience"

Source: Google.com



“Parent-child distance promotes not only a happier child but a happier parent”



They Might be a Helicopter Parent

- If they:
 - Watch campus video feeds
 - Complete the student’s application
 - Call the institution
 - Check the student’s email
 - Try to discuss grades and financial aid with faculty
 - Impersonate their child on the phone or in emails



Source: bestcollegesonline.com/blog



Why do Parents Hover

- Experience anxiety
 - The unknown
 - Failure
 - Safety
 - Happiness
- High expectations
- Lack of confidence



Why do Parents Hover

- More information is available
- Well-intentioned and want their child to be successful
- There's a social element



GREAT LAKES

Five Ways They're Sabotaging

- Disempowering their child
- Their child will have no coping skills
- Parent(s) are not even helping from an authentic place
- Parent(s) are not going to live forever
- Child will make less money



Source: Forbes.com

GREAT LAKES

Strategies to Help Parents "Let Go"







The Emotional Roller Coaster

- Provide opportunities for dialogue
- Recognize students’ emotions
 - Pulled between past, present, and future
- Emphasize this is a time to celebrate
- Parents should expect things to change

Source: greatschools.org

Managing Expectations

- Coordinate efforts at your institution
 - Alleviate anxiety
 - Develop a campus-wide philosophy
 - Must be supported by upper administrators
 - Message must be consistent
 - Provide resource information



GREAT LAKES

Encourage Parent Partnerships

- Anticipate that parents will reach out
- Discuss steps the student can take
- Explain FERPA
- Help parents realize their student needs to grow
- Everyone needs space



GREAT LAKES

Encourage Parent Partnerships

- Offer an orientation for parents
- Give examples of common scenarios
- Provide opportunities for parents to be involved
- Inspire balance and boundaries
 - Consider offering a place on your website where parents can find answers to commonly asked questions



GREAT LAKES

Parenting the College Student

- Help parents help their students



Financial plan



Academic goals and expectations



Communication



Coaching

Source: greatschools.org



Parenting the College Student

- Parents should

- Remember that they are not the student
- Be an anchor
- Acknowledge today is different
- Ask about courses and experiences
- Send care packages



Source: greatschools.org



Parenting the College Student

- Parents should

- Be supportive
- Ask their student questions
- Expect change
- Have patience...and lots of it
- Accept uncontrollable circumstances



Source: greatschools.org



College Breaks

- Remind parents that students have been making their own decisions
- College is a time for exploration and discovery
- Leave room for friends



GREAT LAKES

Wrap Up



Meet Anna

Anna and her mom come into the office to discuss Anna's aid. Mom asks questions, takes notes, and Anna plays on her phone. Later, mom calls asking about how to complete entrance counseling and the MPN.

How would you counsel mom?

GREAT LAKES

Meet Alex

Alex is in your office trying to get his verification completed so he can determine how much he will need to borrow this year. His father has called him every day last week telling him to get into the office and “get it done”.

How would you counsel Alex?



Meet Amanda

Amanda is a freshman at your school who’s a work-study in your office. Every Monday, at least one (and sometimes both) parents call you to complain that they were unable to reach Amanda over the weekend. Amanda says she ignores their calls because she’s out “having fun.”

How do you handle this situation?








