THE STUDENT WITH ADJUSTMENT ISSUES

Transitions are times of change that usually involve both loss and opportunity. Entering college is one of life’s most demanding transitions and is arguably the most significant time of adjustment since starting kindergarten. College students face many challenging transitions, including graduating and entering the work force. The changes inherent in a transition produce stress and challenge a student’s coping resources. Students commonly experience a decline in functioning (academic, social, emotional) during transitions. Adjustments can be worsened by counterproductive coping mechanisms such as avoidance of stress- producing situations and people, excessive partying and alcohol abuse. Transitions can pose greater problems to students who have existing psychological problems or difficult life circumstances. Students going through a period of life adjustment may benefit from counseling to enhance their coping efforts or to prevent the onset of more serious problems.

**WHAT TO DO:**

* Convey to the student that adjustment or transition stress is normal and often brings a temporary decline in performance.
* Encourage the student to use positive coping methods to manage transitions stress, including regular exercise, social support, a reasonable eating and sleeping regimen and pleasurable activities.
* Refer the student to an Advocacy Counselor, especially if performance problems persist beyond a reasonable amount of time.

**WHAT NOT TO DO:**

* Don’t presume that the student understands the impact of life transitions and/or is aware of the source of stress.
* Don’t minimize or trivialize the student’s feelings or reactions.
* Don’t discount or overlook factors that put the student at risk for more problems.

\*\**When in doubt, if any personal information the student tells you raises red flags, consult with* the Student Advocacy and Accountability team. <https://webapps.mccneb.edu/bcat/>