

# Five Tips For Dealing With An Empty Nest: Helping Parents Play It Cool And Give College Students Space

(NAPSA)—The moment you've been waiting for—and simultaneously dreading for 18 years—is finally here. There's no more putting it off: Your baby has left the house and is in college.

We won't pretend this is easy. You've had a son or daughter in your house for nearly two decades, and now the silence is deafening. But while your first impulse may be to call, text, FaceTime, or secretly buy the house on the edge of campus so you can keep close tabs, consider taking a step back instead. Overwhelming your children with attention just as they're learning to live independently is a tactic that could backfire, according to parenting educator and New York Times best-selling author Rosalind Wiseman. Rosalind has teamed up with the Follett Corporation, leading provider of education technology, services and print and digital content, to offer some tips on how to handle your empty nest anxiety to pave the way for a healthy relationship with your newly minted college student:

## **Try Not to Take it Personally**

If you haven't heard from your child, try not to take it personally. It's ironic that being a successful parent means that you've equipped your child to live on his or her own. "They're trying to figure out how to be an adult and have an adult relationship with you," Wiseman said. "It might take a little time, so don't smother them with needy communications."

## **Remember, They're Struggling, Too**

You've probably spent years not falling asleep until you hear your children come home. But now they're living at college and you're wondering if you'll ever be able to sleep again as you worry about what they are doing. What's important to remember is they're navigating uncharted waters as well. They're figuring out how to live with a roommate, properly manage their time and balance it all without your input.

## **Choose Meaningful Contact**

"Don't do the 'Hey, just think-



**Letting go of your college-bound child may be difficult but it could also be fulfilling for the whole family.**

more than twice a week," Wiseman cautions. A huge part of your children's college experience is learning how to live on their own, so try to give them the space to figure it out on their own. While this can be difficult for the—shall we say—more "inquisitive" parents, it will help grow your relationship with your children. And if you choose to follow your college students on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, try to keep an open mind about what you see.

## **Trust Your Child To Work it Out —Don't Play the Middleman**

There are horror stories all over the Internet about parents contacting college professors to complain about the low grades earned by their son or daughter. While we understand the temptation, "under no circumstances should you be contacting teachers at the college," Wiseman said. "Your children are adults and, unless they are incapable of advocating for themselves, you need to butt out." The same goes for roommate disputes because navigating disagreements and learning to compromise are crucial skills for your child to develop.

## **Focus on Yourself, You Deserve it**

Now that you've got the house all to yourself and some more time on your hands, why not use it to your advantage? Remember all those years ago when you dreamed about learning Italian, taking a pottery or cooking class or going to the gym every day? Now is the perfect opportunity to spend more time on you. Not only will it distract you from missing your college student, you'll be learning new things as well!