

TIPS TO PARENTS FROM SENIOR STUDENTS

By junior and senior year of high school, college application stress can start to take a real toll on students, who repeatedly confess they are overwhelmed by all they have to do in addition to the regular academic workload – college essays, visits, test prep, etc. BHS Peer Leaders contributed to the following list of tips to parents on supporting your teen through this challenging period.

Take your child's lead on talking about college and don't frequently bring it up -- respect the need to have down time NOT centered around school and college prep. Also ask relatives and friends to **limit questions and advice** about college plans.

Try not to feed into the culture of competitiveness. Don't ask where friends are applying, or who is getting into which school early decision – your child will share when he/she is ready. Remember, your child is the one applying to college, NOT YOU.

If you are worried your child needs help following through on applications, etc., consider **setting up a time once a week** to check in and talk about it. Find a communication strategy that works for your family.

Volunteer to help, if needed, but don't be intrusive or nag. Teens most often appreciate when parents do little things -- bring a snack, offer a ride, help print out a paper, etc.

Give your teen space and cut him/her some slack over household expectations and chores. And don't take it personally if they snap at you – choose your battles.

Manage your own stress -- don't feed into your teen's drama, but take steps to manage your own anxiety – exercise, social outlets, proper sleep, etc.

Have an honest conversation about **college financing**, and remember that **college isn't for everyone**. Be open if your child is not ready for college or wants to explore **other options**.

Help your teen stay calm and **maintain perspective**. Keep an eye on the big picture – there are many different kinds of futures and many different ways to get there.

Remember, while your teen may not let you know it, underneath he/she is anxious about leaving home. Be calm, reassuring, and supportive – this too shall pass!

For more information, go to the "Transitions" page at www.B-PEN.org or contact coordinators June Harris (june_harris@psbma.org) or Karen Campbell (Karen_campbell@psbma.org)