Helicopter Parents

Fraternity Executives Association

Annual Meeting

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Helicopter Parent Profile

- Baby Boomer generation - b. 1943-1960
- Wealthiest and most-educated in history
- “Baby on Board” signs and “My Child is an Honor Student” bumper stickers
- Very influential in student’s life
- Engaged technologically
- High expectations for student’s college experience
Helicopter Behavior

- Hover overhead
- Swoop in to solve problem
- Tethered to student
- Entering career airspace
- Fly directly to top
Why Helicopter Parents are Getting Noisier

- Economic uncertainty
- Technology
- Rising tuition costs
- FERPA access
- Increasing concern for student safety
- Desire for student to excel
Impact of Parental Hovering

- Inflated egos
- Poor self-advocacy skills
- Lack of problem-solving abilities
- Over-pressured
- Difficulty decision-making
- Little common sense
- Strong family bond
- Incentive to do well
Who Are These Students? Millennials
b. 1982-2002

- Community service-oriented and civic-minded
- Team-oriented
- Think it’s hip to be smart
- Rule-followers
- Technologically-savvy
- Multi-taskers

- Remain connected with friends and family while at college
- Dependent on parents for decision-making
- Expectations high
- Demand good customer service
National Norms
1st Year Millennials

- Community-Oriented:
  - 82% volunteer occasionally.
  - 67.3% plan on doing so in college.

- Drinking Behavior:
  - 43.4% drank beer in high school.

- New to College Life:
  - 1 in 6 are first-generation college students.

- Close to Home:
  - Almost 50% first-generation students attend school within 50 miles.

- Multi-tasking:
  - Almost half will work in college to help pay expenses.
Why Millennials Attend College

- **Make more $$$**
  - 73.5% men and 69% women

- **Get a better job**
  - Men and women equally (72.1% and 72.2% respectively)

- **Get training for specific career**
  - 73.1% women and 64.8% men

- **Learn more about interesting topics and for personal/ intellectual development**
  - 81.4% women

- **PARENTS**
  - 43% said “Parents wanted me to go.”

The American Freshman: National Norms for Fall 2005
UCLA CIRP Freshman Survey, Sylvia Hurtado and John H. Pryor
Current Trends

- Freshmen lack basic skills
- Mental health problems increasingly apparent
- Soaring college tuitions = sense of entitlement
- Lobbying organizations for parents
- Increasing technological lifelines
- Parental involvement increasing
Implications

- Be proactive
- Communication is key
- Advocates to encourage membership
- Partners in helping students succeed
- Base of volunteer support
- Source of wisdom and talent
Why Engage Parents

- They’re here!
- Recruiters
- Resources- Time and Money
- Wisdom
- Assist in developing responsible chapter members
Association Response

Parent and Family Relations
Knowledge Community

www.naspa.org/communities/kc/

- “Partnering with parents and families to facilitate student success.”

- Mission: to share best practices and research on the involvement and expectations of college parents to assist university administrators, faculty and staff in facilitating college student success.
University Response

- Parent Program Offices
- Friendraising vs. Fundraising
- Volunteers
- “Letting Go” Education
- FERPA and Parental Notification
- Philosophy of Self-Reliance
- “Parent Bouncers”
Current Partnerships

- New Member Parent Letter
- Active Member Parent Letter
- National Parents Association
- National Website Parent Section
- Mother’s/Dad’s Clubs
- Hazing Hotline
Providing a Flightplan for the Helicopters

- National Newsletter
  - Debunk Stereotypes
  - Share Statistics
- Tips on Talking with Student About...
- Chapter Parent Liaison
Directing a Smooth Landing
On Campus

- Recruitment
- Philanthropic Events/fund raisers
  - Volunteer Day
- Parents Weekend Activities
- Chapter Leadership Training/
  New Member Education
- Mentor Programs- Career, Networking
- Letter to New Members
More Opportunities for Helicopters to Land

- Open Family Chapter Meeting
- Chapter Parent Involvement Awards
- Parent Awards for Chapter Members
- Chapter Campus Contact Cards
- Chapter Website Calendar
- Chapter Newsletter
- Parent Testimonials
Assessment of Current Culture

- How do we involve parents from a national office perspective?
- How do we involve parents at the chapter level?
Resources

- Colleges Ward off Overinvolved Parents - The Wall Street Journal
- No Escape from “Helicopter Parents” - Seattle Post-Intelligencer
- Wikipedia - “Helicopter Parents”
- Experience.com Online Poll - 1/11/06
- Interview Invaded by Noisy Helicopter Parent - Des Moines Register
- Helicopter Parents Go to Work: Moms and Dads Are Now Hovering at the Office - The Wall Street Journal
- Bowling Green State University News for Greek Parents - www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/greekaffairs/GreekParentNws_fall05.pdf