

A2 Achieve Parent Guide: How to Support Your Student Without Taking Over *Stability, not steering*

Parents often feel pressure to either direct or disappear during college decisions. The most effective role lives in between: *grounded support*.

1. Shift From Advice to Curiosity

Students don't need more information. They just need space to think.

Replace advice with questions:

- “What feels exciting here?”
- “What feels heavy?”
- “What would make this decision easier to live with?”

Your curiosity signals trust.

2. Separate Your Story From Theirs

Your college experience, career path, or regrets live in a different context.

College today includes:

- Higher costs
- Different labor markets
- Increased mental health demands
- More complex transitions to adulthood

Your role is to translate wisdom, not transfer expectations.

3. Normalize Exploration and Change

Many students believe:

- Changing majors equals failure
- Uncertainty means they're behind
- One wrong choice ruins everything

You can actively counter this by reinforcing:

- Exploration builds resilience
- Adjustment is maturity, not weakness
- Most careers evolve through iteration

4. Help Protect Non-Negotiables

Parents are especially helpful in identifying:

- Burnout risk
- Unsustainable workloads
- Missing support systems
- Financial blind spots

Ask questions that protect sustainability, not just outcomes.

5. Regulate the Emotional Climate

Students borrow emotional cues from parents.

When parents stay calm:

- Students think more clearly
- Decisions feel manageable
- Conversations stay productive

If emotions spike, pause the decision, not the relationship.

Final Reminder for Parents

Your student doesn't need certainty. They need permission to learn how to choose. Confidence grows when students feel trusted, supported, and allowed to evolve.