



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."

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
- *The American Freshman: National Norms for Fall 2005-*
www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/heri.htm
- *Bowling Green State University News for Greek Parents-*
www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/greekaffairs/GreekParentNws_fall05.pdf
- Lambda Chi Alpha- Parent Letter
www.lamdachi.org/recruitment/lettertoparentsofnewmember.pdf