

Parents Speech 2018

My name is Angie Smith. I am the proud mother of 3 St Alberts students who are all currently studying at the college. Weens is in her 4th year and is currently Head of college with the lovely Oggi, Charlie is in 2nd year and Millie is a fresher. I didn't think it was anything special until I was filling out the forms for parents ball and realised there were only 2 lines for students!

We, as parents can act a bit weird when the time finally arrives for our son or daughter to fly the family nest. I know a number of our children attended boarding school, but the strict supervision and timetables of school are left behind when our children leave and enter the world of university. The 18 plus year old student is so excited to enter an environment with such FREEDOM and lack of parental responsibility, you think you don't need us anymore. I did hear one comment from a fresher a couple of years ago- this is just like Joeys but there's beer and girls!! The ultimate!

Parents can fit into a few categories- there are many more. This is just a quick summary with some advice on how to cope with us.

The first category is the HELICOPTER Parents. They really struggle with their precious child heading to University. They won't be around to lecture you "have you put the garbage out or have you completed your violin practice?" This is not the end of your torment students, as helicopter parents will find ways to torment you at uni with daily face time sessions checking to see if you have attended lectures or tutorials and making sure you are eating properly. They will visit regularly and probably want to stay in your room. Why would they book a hotel?? So how do you cope with helicopter parents? Just remain calm and tell them you need a bit of space, even though you know they are trying to help. Reassure them you are fine and staying on top of your studies _ what are they going to do..... ground you??

Next is the LAIDBACK Parents. These are the parents everybody hopes to be confronted with in the labour ward. But they do have their faults. Starting life as a university student may be a little daunting for you, but the laidback parents, who have spent years not worrying excessively about your upbringing with STRESS not entering their lives, may not be as helpful as you embark on your college adventure. You may hear comments such as "You can drive yourself there can't you?" "Are you sure you need me to help pack?" and "Which university are you going to again?" Just try to get them a little more engaged and ask for a little help. Chances are they will miss you when you are gone and you can let them know you miss them

Now we have the OVERLY EMOTIONAL Parents. This is stereotypically associated with mothers but fathers can be in this category too! There will be lots of tears as your parents face "empty nest syndrome" and realise they are no longer needed as they used to be. Kids , just make sure you tell them you love them and can still be an important part of their life as a uni student. Who else is going to do your semester old washing when you go home for holidays, bail you out of money problems and answers teary phone calls when you are stressed about exams? Your mum and dad, that's who!

The TRYING SO HARD TO BE COOL Parents are next. These are the parents, who after years of demanding your respect and reverence are coming to terms with the fact that you are now an adult. This makes a level playing field and these parents want to make you their buddy. How to cope with

this??? Nip it in the bud.....hang on? You want your parents to stop liking you, after years you are now finally getting their respect and admiration and they are still offering to pay for dinner??? You want to stop this?? Maybe you should have a rethink...

The ACTUALLY COOL Parents. These only come around once in a blue moon but if you look hard enough you will find glimpses in your own parents. The cool parents take you to Harvey Norman to buy a bar fridge then Dan Murphys to stock it up. They don't comment about the state of your room or how many subjects you have failed. They visit once a semester and stop you from dropping out of uni after splitting up from your fresher fling. Kids, be grateful, be nice, be unassuming and remember a relationship works both ways and you might just keep them around.

University represents the beginning of a different and equally fulfilling stage in a relationship between parent and child. No matter which category we parents fit into (I can actually see a little of myself in all categories at various times), we are all proud of you. So So proud of you.

We are proud of you because you are engaging your brain and furthering your education. It is difficult at times trying to negotiate study, a social life sport etc etc. Your education is one thing that can never be taken away from you. You will always keep learning, no matter what you do with your life.

We are proud of you because of your wonderful charity work and sense of community. I was beaming with pride when in 2017 200 and something Albies students, raised \$35,000 for the Jane McGrath foundation. How beautiful to see Tracey Bevan, Jane Mcgrath's friend attend the Sportos dinner and receive a cheque to go towards much needed breast care nurses in rural areas. You kids are fantastic! I also love the way a large number of you attend the Anzac Day dawn service. It is always a little chilly in Armidale in late April and you are there, braving the elements (of course looking forward to a 2up game afterwards!)

We are proud of you when your last exam is over at the end of the year and off you head to work for the summer. I see many of you venture to the north west to drive headers, chaser bins, work at the silo sample stands during harvest. Many of you bug check for the cotton season or irrigate. This is all hot and dusty work, with some hard bosses to deal with, yet none of you complain as you gather your finances for the next year of college. A work ethic is so important in life and learning to budget your hard-earned money for the year ahead is great skill.

We are proud of you because of the wonderful friendships you are forging during your time at college. Your care and the comradery of fellow Albies students is exemplary. These friendships are important not only during your university days but for life. Your friends will share the happy times- Milestone birthdays, engagements, weddings, birth of children, but more importantly those friendship strings will be drawn tight during the hardships of life- death of a parent, child or spouse, financial issues or mental health problems, a relationship or marriage end. These are the times you really need your friends to help you get through.

So when you leave Albies kids you will have furthered your education and know how to engage your brain. You will leave with BIG HEARTS and have a sense of charity and community- BIG HEARTS are so important in this world today. You will leave with a great work ethic and be prepared to work hard. You will leave with fantastic friendships to help get you through the good and bad stages in life. All wonderful attributes to have for your life ahead after you leave the safe harbour of Albies.

So, in finishing, I think the world would be a much better place if it had more Albies people in it!

Thank you and have a fabulous weekend enjoying precious family time.

By Angie Smith

Children

Edwina Fr 2015

Charlie Fr 2017

Millie Fr 2018