

Tips for when your university kids are home for the holidays

(NC) Most parents eagerly look forward to quality time with their children when they come home from university or college for the winter break. But this can also be stressful and chaotic time for any family — students are excited to test out their newfound independence on home turf, while parents and younger siblings aren't sure how to deal with the changes to their daily routines. If your son or daughter is visiting during the holidays, here are some tips to keep everyone happy.

Let them sleep. Between studying for exams, living with roommates and late nights, your child is probably sleep deprived and needs to catch up on rest. For the first few days, at least, let them sleep in and fix their own breakfast — after all, no one's great company when they're tired and cranky.

Make an agenda. You might have a packed schedule of shopping and lunches with grandma planned, but your child may be hoping to spend most of their time binge-



watching television and catching up with old friends. Chat with them about their plans and negotiate a compromise that also includes time for necessary errands, like going to the dentist.

Spoil them, within limits. Stock up on their favourite foods and prepare some delicious treats, but don't do everything for them or else they'll feel like a guest in their own home.

Reinforce healthy living. Take this time to check in and make sure they're following healthy habits and have the support they need. Recommend exploring the campus gym or joining an intramural team, share some nutritious recipe ideas, and remind them about free student mental health services.

Have frank conversations. With the upcoming changes to its legal status being considered, cannabis is likely going to be a hot topic that comes up. Be a useful source of trusted information by providing unbiased facts. Ask open-ended questions and encourage a dialogue that continues even once they're back at school.

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and a

Happy New Year

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