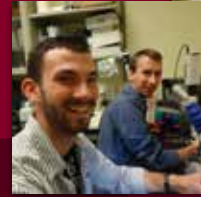


# FIVE CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS



Walsh University Bound

# Five Critical Conversations

We Ask Parents To Have With Your Son/Daughter

Your student is at the starting line of one of the most significant and challenging stages of his or her life. This may be the first time your child is facing the pressure of choosing a vocation, living independently, and learning how to navigate the roads of college academia. Certainly the transition to being a part of university culture will present its triumphs and challenges.

The Student Affairs team at Walsh University is a diverse collection of educators committed to the holistic development of students—including an understanding and appreciation of six core values: respect for self, others, and the world in which we live; integrity in thought, word and deed; excellence in the teaching and learning process; an appreciation of diversity; hospitality; and selfless service.

As your student begins to prepare for his or her arrival at Walsh, we strongly encourage you to begin the important conversations relevant to that transition. This will certainly be an adjustment for both you and your student. Developing open communication with your student will help to reinforce their self-confidence and better understand expectations as they begin their journey.

# 1 Personal Values and Decision Making

You've spent the last eighteen years teaching your son or daughter the values that are most important to you. As your student becomes a member of the Walsh community, they will find our policies and traditions uphold the values of the Judeo-Christian tradition and focus on personal responsibility and accountability, respect for self and others, and positively contributing to all facets of Walsh and our greater communities—both inside and outside of the classroom. Undoubtedly, your student is going to be challenged by new people they encounter. The roommate with different political views, the classmate with a different religious background, the friend from a different ethnicity—all will open your student's eyes and will likely challenge their personal beliefs and values.

**It is critical that your son/daughter be able to articulate personal values and the priorities you have agreed upon in order to help him/her understand the role these play in making personal decisions.** Peer pressure continues to exist in college as it did in high school—only now, the consequences for the decisions are significant. Their personal health and safety, academic standing, relationships, career opportunities, and so much more are at stake.

It is also equally important to spend some time with your student talking about their personal characteristics and values that you appreciate the most. Your student needs to know that you believe in him/her and will always be supportive with both the triumphs and challenges of their college career. Our goal is to help every student develop into a responsible, healthy adult.

## 2 Developing Life-Long Learners

It is often overwhelming for both parents and students to adjust to the changing family roles associated with the college transition. Whether your student is leaving for school or living at home while enrolled at Walsh University, it is vital to talk about what life will be like once the academic year begins. Some parents expect to have daily updates about what's going on, while others are more comfortable with less frequent communication. A discussion about the rules and family expectations is important for all students—especially for those living on campus and expecting the same freedoms when they return home for visits or holiday breaks.

**It is critical that you take some time with your student to develop a plan on the frequency and nature of your communications and involvement.** Remember, allowing your relationship to evolve is key! They still need your wisdom, counsel and support.

**It is also essential that they learn how to make their own decisions and when to ask for support – both from you and campus resources.** Student Affairs professionals at Walsh University are dedicated to helping students in their personal development outside of the classroom. We work with students to learn how to express themselves, negotiate with classmates and roommates, evaluate the decisions they make, and accept the responsibility and consequences of those choices. The students will not learn these critical life skills if we do it for them. We ask parents to join us in encouraging, educating and coaching students with issues involving their personal development.

## 3 Expectations About Alcohol and Marijuana

Walsh University is a community of people who are deeply concerned with the illegal use and abuse of drugs and alcohol. This includes students that may be under the influence while on campus, off campus, or operating a motor vehicle. We consider our student's health, safety, and well-being as our highest priority.

Incoming college students often have preconceived notions about the "alcohol scene" on campus. At Walsh University we expect students to manage their use of alcohol while abiding by University policies, federal, state and local laws. Our

goal is educate students about the impact of alcohol-consumption on one's self and the community, discourage high-risk drinking behaviors, and empower students to make healthy lifestyle decisions.

While students often believe they can drink and be in control, the fact is that drinking impairs judgment, which increases the likelihood that they will do something they will later regret such as unwanted sexual activity and the related consequences, being involved in date rape, damaging property, or being victimized by others.

To help with the conversation, The Century Council defines high risk drinking as:

- **Chugging, drinking games, shots**
- **Drinking to get drunk**
- **Driving after drinking or riding with someone under the influence**
- **Drinking too much too fast**
- **Going to parties where people drink too much**
- **Not knowing what is in your glass or leaving it unattended**
- **Mixing alcohol with medications or illegal drugs**

### 3 Expectations About Alcohol and Marijuana (Continued)

Marijuana is the most commonly used illicit drug in the United States. Over the last several years, colleges and universities across the nation have reported dramatic increases among students who use marijuana. More alarmingly the percentage of youth that believe marijuana use is risky is rapidly decreasing.

We believe it's important for students to understand both the risks and long-term effects of marijuana. Under federal law, marijuana is treated like every other controlled substance, such as cocaine and heroin. Marijuana is classified as

a Schedule I drug, which means that the federal government views marijuana as highly addictive and having no medicinal value. Further, the federal government does not recognize the difference between medical and recreational use of marijuana.

Accordingly, Walsh University does not allow the use of marijuana in any of its forms on our campuses and/or any University sponsored events. ***This will remain our policy regardless of the outcome of any state legislation involving the legalization of marijuana in Ohio.***

**As a parent, it's important to begin having the conversation about alcohol and marijuana now! It is critical to talk to your son or daughter about your expectations regarding the choices they may face.** Set clear expectations about their academic performance and social engagement. Talk about how their decisions regarding how alcohol and marijuana can impact their ability to be a successful college student. Encourage your student to think critically about how he or she will navigate through situations involving peer pressure and college parties.

## 4 Academic Performance

As your student makes the transition from high school to college, it is not uncommon that they will face challenges adapting to the rigor and pace of college level classes. It is likely they will have to learn new ways to study and manage their course load.

Professors do not “give them grades”—students earn their grades. This is an important distinction. Students need to understand that they will need to work hard to earn their grades, consistently study throughout the semester, ask for help if needed early and often, and must learn to skillfully manage their time which places a priority on academics first.

**It is critical to work with your student to talk about their own academic goals during their first semester at Walsh and strategies they will use to achieve those goals.** Help them to regularly evaluate the strategies that are working and when to ask for additional help. Discuss how you plan to communicate with them about their academic performance and grades. Be sure to talk with your son or daughter about the resources on campus that will help to promote their academic success at Walsh University. These resources may include their Freshman Advisor, GE100 or GE110 instructor, the Academic Support Center, Library, or Counseling Services. Remind them that these support services are available on campus and are free. Encourage them to ask for help!

## 5 Making Connections

During summer orientation, it is likely your student has been given some very important advice by an Orientation Leader, faculty, or staff member—“Make sure you get involved!” and “Don’t be afraid to ask for help!” Although this may sound redundant, it is the best possible guidance your student could take from day one! Research shows, the more involved the student is, the more likely he or she will thrive in college. **It is very important for your student to begin making connections during the first few weeks of their first semester.**

Talk with your student about their interests inside and outside the classroom. What plans does he or she have to become involved in University life? What clubs or organizations is he or she interested in? If your student is encountering a problem, what resources will they seek out for assistance? Encourage your student to take the necessary steps to help ensure their own success by becoming involved in student life.



# Parents,

I welcome your feedback about *Walsh University Bound: Five Critical Conversations*. I am eager to hear about your conversations—the funny moments, your concerns or fears, and if you need additional information or support.

Please also do not hesitate to share with me your son's or daughter's successes both on and off campus, as well as any challenges we should be aware of which may impact their success on campus.

I will keep you all in my prayers—for Parents to find the right words and for the Students to have both a receptive mind and heart. May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless Walsh University.



Amy K. Malaska  
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QUESTIONS

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