

Dear Freshmen Parent:

I too was standing in your shoes approximately one year ago. Worried, afraid, apprehensive, unsure, and extremely anxious, are words that described how I was feeling perfectly. No matter what I tried to do to put my mind at ease I couldn't comprehend leaving my Son 936 miles behind, but I knew that this is what he needed. The REACH Program was exactly the program for him.

The night before school started my worst fear had come true.... he didn't want to stay. He doubted himself. He was afraid to be that far away from home. He didn't think he could do it. I wanted to tell him I had the same fears he had, but I didn't. I was so strong I even surprised myself. We were texting back and forth all through the night, and when I say all through the night, he started at 11:00 p.m. until 5:00 a.m. But I kept reminding him that he could do it, and he had to try, but in the back of my head I was ready to go pick him up and tell him he could come home, and everything would be fine.

I knew if we did go pick him up it would be proving to him that we didn't have the confidence in him either and that would have been the worse thing we as parents could have ever done. We were always pushing him and to stop now would have been detrimental to his future. Remember "Even Eagles Need A Push".

I wish I could tell you it was smooth sailing from there on out but it wasn't. We had many bumps in the road; many phone calls, and a couple of more times when he doubted himself yet again. We all stayed very positive with him and always reminded him as to how proud we were of what he was accomplishing.

When our Son came home throughout his first year at school he was always looking forward to going back because he knew this is where he needed to be. People that have known him his entire life couldn't believe in the change in our Son. He was a more social, confident, and mature young man.

Being many miles from home isn't easy for any student, especially for a student with learning differences. The support he has at College of Charleston is amazing. They are there to help him both academically and emotionally.

My best advice to you will be to take it one day at a time, and one phone call at a time. Always stay positive. Don't talk too much about what is going on at home because you don't want them to feel like they are missing anything, concentrate on what is going on at school.

I wish you and your student all the best. College of Charleston is a very special place and I wish you all a wonderful experience.

Stay strong,
Karen