

TO: Parent/Caregiver of Aquinas Fourth Year Student

FROM: The Counselors at Aquinas College Counseling, Health & Wellness Services

Congratulations, your child has made it to their fourth year of college! Your child has learned a lot in the past 3 years. In this fourth year, your child will be finishing their journey and development, but your help is still needed as they make the transition to full independence.

The final year of college is when students start to slack off because they are close to finishing, also known as senioritis. They have mastered their ability to juggle academic and social demands, while having a clear picture of what their college routine will look like. Your child will have developed a sense of identity, purpose, and integrity. They are able to think critically about the multiple perspectives and weigh the options they have in front of them. Difficulties like anxiety, stress, depression, relationship issues, alcohol/substance abuse, burnout, and eating disorders are still experienced. But, students face new difficulties, like what comes next after they finish, will they continue their education, do they have a job lined up after graduation, and they may have questions about where they will live.

As a parent you can help your child by maintaining communication and support. Simply listening to their struggles and offering advice when asked will validate your child's thoughts, feelings, and experiences. This lets your child know that what they are feeling and thinking is normal, thus, reducing some of the stress and anxiety they experience.

To learn more about common mental health issues for college students, visit the *Mental Health Resources* page on the Counseling, Health & Wellness Services' website.

For more information about helping your child during their college career, visit the *Info For Parents* page of our website.

Counseling Services at Aquinas College are available to help your child with concerns they may encounter while at college. Counseling provides a safe environment where students can openly express their thoughts and feelings with a trained professional counselor who serves as an objective listener. Counseling staff are available for scheduled individual appointments.

Aquinas College Counseling, Health & Wellness Services

**Hours:** Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Walk-in Hours:** Monday – Friday, 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.

**Location:** Donnelly Center, Lower Level

**Phone:** (616) 632-2905

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