

# ROOMMATE CONFLICT SUPPORT

## HOW PARENTS CAN SUPPORT THEIR STUDENT THROUGH A ROOMMATE CONFLICT

Although the roommate matching process helps students find a compatible roommate, there is never a guarantee to find the perfect roommate. Even the best roommates may experience conflict because people from different backgrounds, identities, and values are sharing space. In addition to differences, college age students are still developing and learning how to communicate through conflict. Housing's goal is to help students grow their conflict management skills that will benefit them the rest of their life. As parents, you may be the first to hear about your student's roommate conflict. This resource page will give you tips on how to have a supportive conversation with your student.



### LISTEN

Listening shows that you are empathetic and allows your student to find their own solutions.

#### Listening Skills:

- "Tell me more..."
- Repeat back key words/phrases to encourage more talking

#### Summarize what your student shares and check for understanding:

- "I hear you saying....is that right?"
- "It sounds like....is that close?"

#### Ask open ended questions:

- "Could you give me a specific example?"
- "What do you mean by...?"
- "How did you feel when...?"

#### Solutions:

- What solutions have you tried?

### AFFIRM

Positive affirmations can encourage your student to be brave enough to confront conflict in a positive manner.

#### Empathy

- "It must be really challenging when you have to..."

#### Encouragement

- You are so capable and I can see you coming out of this a better communicator
- Remind them of a time they successfully worked through conflict

#### Admiration

- Tell your student about qualities they have that can help them through this situation
- "It impressed me when..."

### DO NOT...

- Take sides. Stay as objective as possible and normalize conflict.
- Give solutions. Allow your student to find a solution.
- Encourage your student to wait to address the problem. Early communication is key.

### REFER

If your student needs additional support have them contact their Resident Assistant (RA). RA's are trained on mediating conflict between roommates.

Refer your student to the Positive Confrontation resource page found on our website.

Residents may also submit a Roommate Conflict Form found on our website.

## TIPS TO REDUCE CONFLICT

- communicate immediately
- don't ignore issues
- be realistic
- create detailed roommate agreement

- update roommate agreement
- adjust expectations
- compromise
- positive confrontation