

Dear Parents and Family,

We are delighted to welcome you and your student to the University of San Francisco this coming fall! We look forward to seeing you at the Parent and Family Orientation events during New Student Orientation, and we encourage you to keep an eye on your mailbox in the coming days for your copy of the family guidebook.

The University of San Francisco is committed to the safety and well-being of our students, and though we are an urban campus, the neighborhoods surrounding USF are among the safest in the City. We have taken a number of measures to enhance the health and safety of the students, including safety shuttles, educational programs, and new technology that allow us to enhance the overall experience of our campus. Our most recent student satisfaction survey shows that students rate confidence in campus safety higher than any other single factor in the survey.

As part of our commitment to our students, we've undertaken an educational campaign that includes outreach to parents and families. You have most likely read recent headlines that focus on universities' responses to issues of sexual harassment and assault. As an urban, Jesuit and Catholic university committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all students, USF is a proactive advocate in the national dialogues about sexual assault on college campuses and remains on the forefront of related educational reforms and practices.

As you prepare to help your student enter college, we ask for your support in this work by helping us to welcome your student into a community that values respect for all persons and a student body that looks out for each other. Parents and families assist us in developing a community of support and safety by having a frank conversation about alcohol and substance use and also about decisions around intimacy.

We recognize these discussions aren't always easy, and we'd like to offer some practical advice. For all families, we recommend that you view Jackson Katz's TedTalk, titled "*Violence against women—it's a men's issue*" with your student. This brief presentation addresses several perspectives that reframe the issue of violence and offers practical suggestions for preventing it. Review with your student the values and mores that have underpinned your family and that arise from your tradition.

We also recommend downloading the mobile phone app *Circle of 6*, a helpful tool for discretely requesting preselected friends to intervene whenever students feel they are in unsure or unsafe situations. We recommend you watch the brief informational video and discuss with your student whom they might include in their circle of six; the developers of the app suggest that first-time college students include both a trusted adult as well as a friend or two from high school, even if those friends are not attending USF this fall. Students may want to include USF's 24-hour confidential sexual assault support line at 855-227-2499. These apps, as well as other vital safety information, will also be made available during New Student Orientation.

We take the issues of sexual assault and intimate partner violence very seriously and have a variety of additional support systems in place both before and after your student arrives on campus, including our own prevention program *Think About It*. Together with our certified Title IX sexual assault response and investigation team, we have a wide variety of preventive programming coupled with student-centered policies and response practices. Additionally, we offer support for you as parents. Please consider attending one of our Parent Family Orientation sessions during New Student Orientation offered by Dr. Barbara Thomas, senior director of our counseling center, where you will learn more about posing the most helpful questions to your student as they transition to USF. Dr. Thomas and her staff are also

available to consult with parents and families about any issue related to your student, with practical advice on discussing difficult subjects, through the USF Counseling and Psychological Services Center (CAPS) at 415-422-6352. All of this information is also available in the family guidebook.

Finally, a select group of last year's students responded to the question, "how would you have wanted your parents to talk with you about alcohol and sexual assault prevention before coming to school?" We hope some of their answers, paired with additional information below, will help you begin the discussions of creating a community of care and respect among our student body.

"I think I'd ask them to reinforce the idea that I should look after my friends. If I were too drunk to make effective decisions, I would want to know I have friends who've got my back, and I'd let them know they can expect the same from me." Reggie, sophomore.

"My mom never spoke with me about alcohol and consent. I've learned from the peer health educator that sometimes I drink in order to do things I want to do, but might be inhibited to do when I'm sober. That's both frightening and enticing at the same time. On second thought, maybe I don't want to have that conversation with my mom, so I'm not sure." Alexandra, freshman.

"Actually, my dad did that. He told me that making jokes about women, or taking advantage of someone when they were drunk was disrespectful and illegal. He let me know that...you know, I have two sisters, and that how would I feel if someone treated them that way? That was a powerful message from him." Anonymous

We are excited to welcome you during New Student Orientation in August and look forward to your student joining us at the University of San Francisco.

Sincerely,



Peter Novak
Vice Provost of Student Life
University of San Francisco

- Information about USF and Campus Clarity's program *Think About It*, and the requirements for our students to complete the course may be found at: http://www.usfca.edu/hps/Think_About_It/
- Circle of 6 can be found and downloaded at: <http://www.circleof6app.com>
- Jackson Katz, Ph.D. and his TedTalk may be found at: http://www.ted.com/talks/jackson_katz_violence_against_women_it_s_a_men_s_issue
- The White House's resource page also includes valuable information and can be found at: <https://www.notalone.gov/>