When I was a freshman at Aurora University, I found something I heard people talk about but really never understood. I found my own freedom. I will never say my parents were not strict with me, but when I was in high school I thought I had freedom as I never had a curfew per se, I just needed to call my parents and let them know where I was. Mind you, this was before the days of cell phones, so as soon as I arrived to my friend’s house I had to b-line right to the landline phone and call or I would be grounded. It seemed to be the good life, considering all of my friends had a curfew around 10:00pm. That all changed the minute I stepped foot in my residence hall room in college. I tasted the true side of freedom and I wanted more. I did not have to call home every hour letting my parents know where I was; I could roam free and do what I wanted (within reason, mind you). But then something interesting happened that felt weird… I went home for the summer. Oh boy!

I am not a parent, so to say I completely understand would be an insult to the entire parent assembly out there reading, but in my position I have grown to empathize with a parent. To say it is a challenge for the parent to have their son or daughter reside down the hall for eighteen years and then to just let them roam free with the world is an understatement. It is a challenge to open your arms and let them fly away, but what is even harder is opening your arms again and bringing them home for summer. After all the effort of hauling that couch and mountains of clothes up the stairs, you turn around nine months later and haul it all back down. A great conversation is had as you drive home, hearing new stories of the year and then (as you’re icing down your aching back from hauling the heavy futon down four flights of stairs), your collegiate student says they want to go hang out with their friends!

I have two pieces of advice I can give about the coming home process.

Number one is things have to change. Home is still home, but it will look a little different; maybe a little smaller or maybe a little bigger. It wasn’t until I had not been home for more than two months that it dawned on me: My home has its own smell to it. You might even notice new changes in the family dynamics. One of the many lessons I have learned as I have gotten older is my father does not have all the answers (even though he thinks he does many times). These feelings came from just being exposed to more in college and understanding the world more for what it is and where I feel I fit in the mold of things. Now this is not saying parents and students have turned into new people. That is not true at all, but students have developed more of a personal identity, a more self awareness of who they want to be and who they are becoming.

Bearing all of this in mind is number two, communication. I was a communication student, so I hold the ancient art of communicating dear to my heart. So many of the issues I have heard from either students or friends who have come home is the lack of talking between students and their guardians. Whenever a friend would come to me and complain of how difficult it is to be back home and under parent’s supervision again after having a year of newfound freedom, I always ask, “have you talked with them about how you’re feeling?” More often than not, the answer given back is “No,” to which then I say “talk it through and you will be amazed how much they are not aware of your feelings in this situation.” It is easy to slip back into the roles we had when we were kids. Every now and then when I go home, I find myself talking to my parents in a tone similar to if I was sixteen years old again. It happens; ‘nature of the beast’ as they say. The best way to make everyone happy is as soon as your bags are unpacked and dad has recovered from lifting your couch, everyone sit down and have a really good conversation about what has changed in the past year and where to go from that conversation on. It is amazing how students and guardians will both be happy as a result.
The Today Show recently aired some advice that I feel can be helpful to parents and students as both venture into the time of reuniting this summer.

**Negotiate conflicts early:** There are things you know will be sources of tension. They tend to be curfews, use of the car, phone and Internet, money use, visitation and household responsibilities. Decide ahead of time what both sides are willing to settle for with each of these items. Then sit down with your game plan and discuss. Find a place where you can compromise and make these the ground rules for the summer.

**Be flexible:** Guardians, If you force the same rules on your son and daughter they had before they lived on their own at school, they will truly resent it and may not want to come home, which would be a loss for you. So try to be more flexible while maintaining certain limits the family needs to coexist.

For instance, let your kid sleep until 1 p.m. for the first few days but then pick a reasonable time (like 10 a.m.) after that so that the rest of the family can do what they need to or don’t insist they be home by 11 p.m. when you know at school they were out until 4 a.m., but do say they must tell you when they will be home in advance and stick to it or call if they cannot so you don’t have to worry when they aren’t there. If they use the car they must agree to times you can spare it and say when and where they will be, again so you are not left anxious.

Students, do your best to listen to your parents. They are not just doing it to do it. Remember, they were once your age and they know what could happen, so don’t write it off, but know since they were in your shoes, you can talk to them reasonably of the things that are not working. It might not have worked for them as well and they just do not recall these moments.

**Encourage an adult-to-adult relationship:** When you come off as an authoritative parent, you push your child away. When you’re a child and you don’t listen, you will push your parents towards being authoritative. It can be a vicious circle, unless communication and openness are key elements. He or she may be struggling to become an adult, and it’s difficult. Try listening to their opinions and ideas. Invite them to discuss how they feel about various issues and then also tell them how you feel. The evolution to this kind of relationship will be very gratifying for both of you.

**Accept them:** For parents, while your child is in the new universe of college, they are most likely trying on different personas, which may be different from the way they were before. But you need to be somewhat accepting of their different clothing, hair, friends and independence. In fact, you need to accept them as adults. If you are going to have a good relationship with them, you need to appreciate them for who they are. For students, your parents will be going through a different change as well. They might actually be reverting to a time before you, when they themselves were cool and were having fun, so do not get in the way of that as well. As they offer you space, allow them space as well.

**Show them you want them home:** For both, let them know how happy you are to be with them. It’s easy to get off the path into how much it’s all bugging you and do a lot of griping. This will make them feel unwanted and next time they may not come home or want you to come home. Allow them time with their old and new friends, but then ask them to save some time for you, so you can do something fun together.
# Test Anxiety: Causes & Eliminators

A little tension before a test is good. It keeps you alert and ready. But when the tension gets too high, that emotion can flood your ability to think and respond quickly and accurately. The result is poor performance on the test. This problem is often referred to as “test anxiety.” Here are more “causes” of test anxiety, along with “eliminators” to help you lower anxiety and perform your best.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causes</th>
<th>Eliminators</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Giving in to guilt or anxiety due to a lack of preparation</td>
<td>College requires a commitment of time. If you are truly well prepared, you will “forgive” yourself for a few mistakes due to stress or anxiety. If you do feel guilty, to may be because you have not really made school a priority and focus in your life.</td>
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<td>2. Underpreparing and “going blank”</td>
<td>The purpose of tests and exams is: (1.) to evaluate your retention of course material, (2.) to apply the information to demonstrate understanding or to solve new problems. Failing to properly prepare and doing poorly on the exam becomes a self-perpetuating cycles of low effort leading to low grades.</td>
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<td>3. Letting grades determine your self-worth</td>
<td>Realize that a grade is only an approximate measure of your performance. Grades have nothing to do with you as a person but are a helpful guide to what you need to review.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Trying to meet other people’s expectations</td>
<td>Decide whether living up to these expectations is something you want to do for yourself. Set your own goals and live up to your own expectations.</td>
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<td>5. Fearing loss of affection</td>
<td>Understand that people like you and value your presence in their lives for many reasons — none of which is the grade you made on a test.</td>
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<td>6. Placing excessive emphasis on a single test</td>
<td>Your semester grade may include, in addition to tests, quizzes, homework, papers, presentations, lab reports and class participation. Keep up with the material as if you had to take a major test every week.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Feeling helpless, with no control over what happens</td>
<td>Take charge by taking control. Improve your study habits. Prepare for your next test by starting NOW. Observe the connection between the amount and quality of your studying, and the grade you earn.</td>
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When it comes to sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) many students often think: “it won’t happen to me”. In fact, according to recent survey data from the American Social Health Association, only 14% of men and 8% of women surveyed thought they were at risk of becoming infected with an STD.

Because the risk is often underestimated, and because many STDs often have no symptoms, many people do not get tested and then inadvertently pass the infections to others.

MTV, the Kaiser Family Foundation, Planned Parenthood, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are supporting National STD Awareness Month with GYT: Get Yourself Tested. The GYT campaign seeks to create a social movement around getting tested and to remove the taboos surrounding STD testing.

Serving as the information center for the campaign, www.GYTnow.org provides facts on STDs, tips on how to discuss testing with partners and healthcare providers, and an easy to use testing center locator, provided by the CDC.

Many sexually transmitted diseases can be easily cured, but if left untreated, they may cause unpleasant symptoms and could lead to long-term damage such as infertility.

The best way to prevent STDs, is to abstain from sex or protect yourself by using a barrier method of birth control.

For additional information on STDs, visit www.cdc.gov/std
**SPRING FLING WEEK 2010**

_Brought to you by the Activities Programming Board_

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**Magician Wayne Hoffman**

Monday, April 12, 10:00-11:15 p.m.
Crimi Auditorium

Hoffman is a professional mentalist and illusionist who is working on three different television shows. He recently finished a European tour and continues to perform at major theaters and college campuses. Experiencing his magic is a great way to start Spring Fling Week!

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**Comedian Ben Kronberg**

Tuesday, April 13, 10:00-11:15 p.m.
Dunham Hall Atrium

Kronberg’s unique style blends clever one-liners and witty observations with catchy songs that he performs while playing instruments like the guitar, keyboard and loop pedal. Since his breakout performance in Aspen, Colorado, Ben has performed on _Jimmy Kimmel Live_ and _Last Call with Carson Daly._

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**Musician Scott Porter**

Wednesday, April 14, 10:00-11:15 p.m.
_AND_
Thursday, April 15, Noon-1:00 p.m.
Spartan Spot

Scott Porter is a 20 year old singer/songwriter from St. Louis. This self taught Acoustic/Rock artist has opened for nationally known artists such as American Idol Winner Taylor Hicks, Ari Hest, Corey Smith, Candy Coburn and The Smash Band. Don’t miss this chance to see Scott live!

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**SPRING FLING CARNIVAL**

Friday, April 16, 3:00-7:00 p.m. on the AU Practice Field

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**Spring Fling Formal Dance: "Parisian Escape"**

Saturday, April 17, 6:00 p.m.-12:00 a.m. (Dinner served at 7:00 p.m.)
Lincoln Inn Banquets (1345 South Batavia Avenue, Batavia, IL)
Tickets on sale Wednesday, April 7 - Friday, April 16 in the Spartan Spot
$15 for a single ticket, $25 for a couples ticket

_Guests from other schools are allowed, but this must be noted when purchasing tickets. Transportation will be provided, but is not mandatory. The bus will leave the Spartan Spot at 5:30 p.m. This must also be noted when purchasing your tickets._