

Suggestions from the Class of 2023 Parents that the Class of 2024 Incoming Plebe Parents Should Know

1. The Parent motto is **Semper Gumby** which translates to "Always Flexible." Basically no matter how hard you plan, prepare, research, and/or understand, be ready for the military to throw a wrench into those plans, often at the last minute. Or, they won't provide you with all the info you need to plan as soon as you might like. So be prepared to be flexible!
2. **Where's Waldo?** Alumni Photos, Thornton Studios, etc.
3. How to properly **address** a plebe summer package. It changes on a certain date after PS but then stays the same for the next 4 years. But "Semper Gumby!"
4. A **yard bag** and the necessary contents- Tide stain pens!
5. The parents' mantra: **Your Mid is my Mid**. Since we all are "local," be prepared to have lots of Plebes visit. Or be prepared for your Plebe to bring the holiday laundry from his/her friends!
6. Get to know your Plebe's **sponsor** family. A good sponsor has helped many Mids and families. Even though we all live close, a sponsor may be able to help when you cannot.
7. Your Mid will **inform** you. Let them take the lead. Let them go, as in do not "hover." Let them figure it out for themselves.
8. Your Mid will not tell you enough for you to feel informed.
9. Thirty minute **phone calls** can go fast OR slow....either way. Listen first. Have prepared questions. Take notes, or, better yet, record the calls to refer back to. Remember,

you are getting a moment in time, and their perspective can change quickly. Plebe summer WILL end.

10. **Listen and encourage** as much as possible. Letting them go is so hard at first, but it does get better.
11. They will need **money**. They order food to be delivered to Gate 1 for pick up, among other things.
12. Send **packages** for Plebes that might not receive one.
13. **Trust** the process!
14. Get ready for the best **before and after** shots of your children. The change after Plebe summer is remarkable.



15. Rely on your **Parent FB group**/NOVA group and NOT your Mid for info, or you will remain clueless. If you are not on Facebook, think about creating an account for the massive amount of information to be learned about this process. And photos and videos.
16. When your plebe says they don't like it there, just nod and don't argue. Most go through a time they honestly don't like it, but they **persevere** and make it just fine.
17. Pick a new **hobby** to stay busy because you will miss them like crazy.

18. You just thought you were **patriotic**. You will cry at every flag and/or every time the National Anthem plays.
19. Your **pride** will be hard to contain.
20. Don't say "Hey, I read on FB group..." Or get ready for the **eye rolls**. But keep reading FB group.
21. Sending them a **care package** once a month is plenty. Their space is small, and they move often from room to room Plebe year.
22. Go watch Friday morning **PT** during Plebe Summer. It is super early but totally worth it. Ask Toni Metcalf for specifics. She would probably go with you!

Always remember they have been SELECTED to attend THE USNA because of their potential to be leaders. When what appears to parents as inconveniences or personal injustices happen, it is not our job to intervene or fix it. If they are gonna lead this country, they need to fix things themselves. And they do. Or those things that they were complaining about actually were just part of a venting session to get it off their chest, not seeking us to fix it. Let your midshipman figure it out. Also be prepared for the times when they feel overwhelmed by the load they are expected to accomplish because if this place was easy to conquer, more would do it.

Here are a few that might be useful down the road, but do not pertain to us as much as we are "local."

★Exactly how much stuff fits in the postal flat rate box! You can maximize that using space bags. If you are sending clothes, blankets, etc., you can really send a lot. They can

be reused over and over. Have your Plebe bring them home, and you can send them back full in boxes.

- ★ To bring an extra bag when visiting to get Midstore purchases home!
- ★ Bring a box of personal items to mail from the Annapolis post office after drop off.