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Campus Safety

The issue of campus safety has become a primary concern of parents of college-bound students. Incidents like the Virginia Tech shooting and the tornadoes at Union University have prompted universities to develop broad-reaching emergency response plans. As a parent in the college search process, there are some things that you should look for to determine the level of campus safety at a university:

All colleges participating in federal financial aid programs must publish a crime report each year. Ask for a copy of this publication from the campus security office. If the college also publishes a campus safety guide, get a copy of it as well.

Ask about emergency alert systems. Does the college have in place a text message alert system? If so, has it been successfully tested, and what is the average time it takes to alert all students? Does the college employ outdoor sirens to notify students of emergencies or severe weather? If so, how many sirens does the campus have and are they adequate to cover the acreage of the campus?

Take notice of campus access points. Can the university restrict access to its campus? Can it secure the campus through a lockdown in the event of an emergency or external threat? If it cannot close off the campus, inquire as to the university's emergency response plan to monitor access to the campus.

Ask about restricted dorm access. Do the dorms restrict access at certain times of the day to residents only? Many colleges give dorm residents an access card that they must swipe in order to enter the dorm.

Visit the campus security offices. Most campuses employ an on-campus security department or police force. Some even utilize local police officers during certain times to ensure safety on campus.

Ask about the campus safety program. Most campuses will also offer a campus safety escort for students leaving buildings late at night. Check for the presence of emergency call boxes around campus or inquire about the procedures for the campus safety escort services available on campus.

Don't neglect your child's safety education while he or she is still living at home. Stress to them to lock their dorm room or apartment doors when they leave, to travel in groups, and to inform their roommates when they leave campus. No matter how secure the campus is, it is important for students to keep their cars locked and to not leave their personal things unattended, even for a short time.

At Dallas Baptist University, we believe that college should be a safe place for students to live, work, and study. Dallas Police Department officials regard DBU as one of the safest places in Dallas. In response to the Virginia Tech tragedy, DBU has employed many additional safeguards to ensure that students are protected on our campus. DBU's campus is entirely gated and can be completely closed in the event of an emergency. DBU remains diligent to ensure the safety of its students by employing security initiatives, such as outdoor campus sirens, text message alert systems, a campus curfew, and an on-campus city police presence.

The world around you may be unsure these days, but colleges and universities are making great strides to ensure the well-being of their students.