



# Handling Homesickness: Helping Transitioning First-Year Students at the University of Dayton

## Recognize and Cope with Homesickness

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### Abstract

The transition to college can be the biggest change many first-year students have ever faced. This immense shift can lead to a common form of anxiety called homesickness. Unfortunately, at UD, there seems to be a lack of resources and attention on this topic. To investigate this, we interviewed first year students and resident assistants as well as researched what resources other universities had to offer. Our goal was to provide first-year students experiencing homesickness with resources dedicated to help increase their overall happiness on campus while also aiding them in their transition into college-life.



### Problem

At one point throughout their college careers, 95% of all college students experience homesickness. Homesickness is a form of separation anxiety that can be accompanied by a strong sense of longing due to separation from home, common environment, and their loved ones. This problem is often overlooked as many different mental health conditions receive more attention on college campuses. Without proper treatment, however, symptoms can aggravate into intense mental health conditions that can sometimes lead to drop out or transferring of first year students.

### Method

Our methods included contacting the Health Center and Counseling Center to determine if they had any resources for UD students. We found that neither had any resources specifically on homesickness. However, through more research we found that the University of Dayton's website included a lengthy section covering the topic. Although the content was useful, we wanted see what other schools had to offer. After this research, we began to interview current first-year students on and off UD's campus as well as current resident assistants in attempt to gain more information.

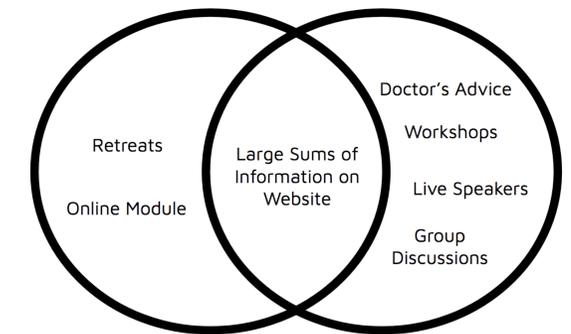
### Our New Brochure



### Results

University of Dayton

Other Schools



The Venn diagram above illustrates the available resources at other universities in comparison to resources available at UD.

### Recommendations

- Camp Blue-esque retreat
  - New relationships
  - Groups would meet up after retreat
- Path-point eligible group discussion
  - Easy excuse for those concerned with being judged by peers
  - Less intimidating approach
- Parent seminar
  - As new students are dropped of
  - Prominence and normality of homesickness
  - Available resources
- Brochure available in the counseling office.