Home For The Holidays

by Lesley Ann Mitchell

For many people, the holidays conjure up images of joyous reunions with friends and family. For thousands of college students, the holiday season also will mark the first time they've been "home" for months. That "homecoming" for the holidays may also mean, once again, coping with being treated like a child. "It's really hard for me to come home after being at school because I'm used to my freedom," says Northern Arizona University junior Nicole Riedinger, 21. "When I get home, it's hard to adjust to brothers and sisters and everything all over again." Psychologists say holidays sometimes take college students back to childhood and "the way it was before they left for school" — whether they like it or not. "When students are involved with peers and classes, they forget what it's like at home," says John Carazzini, director of counseling services at Virginia Commenwealth University. "Good or bad, coming home for a holiday puts them right back in the middle of it." Carazzini says holiday depression among college students is more common today than five or 10 years ago. "Holidays today really tend to kick things off," days for some students cause them to confront what he or she doesn't he says. "In this era of the breakdown of the family system, like divorces,

up unreasonable expectations of the holiday — and family. After the have." After months away from home, college students also might build disappointed, he says. "Some students experience holiday blues more holidays are over, many college students return to the university setting once it happens it never really is what they thought it would be. They'll try in elation to the anticipation of Christmas," Carazzini says. "In reality, to be disappointed." While families are together this holiday season, psyto recapture the fantasy of childhood and in the process, set themselves up chologists recommend: — Compromise. Students and parents should discuss the chologists recommend to the chologists expectations and differences before a holiday break begins. length of time. - Parents and students both should learn not to set should set clear "house" rules while the student remains in the home for any unrealistic expectations for how family members should act, especially during holidays. Richard Bedrosian, a clinical psychologist in North Boro, Mass., says

holidays may be more enjoyable to college students after graduation. "Many students will find Christmas more enjoyable when they're 25 or 26," he says. "The holidays (during college years) act as a lense to magnify problems at home. There's stress and strain when students and parents step back into their old relationship."

Psychologists say even students who had a good relationship with their parents before leaving for school will find holidays during these transitional years Terri Behm, 21, says returning home for Christmas after her first semester at Ricks College in Rexsburg, Tex., was difficult even though she says she communicates with her parents well. "With my brothers it was no big deal," she says. "With them, I just pick up where we left off ... But with my parents it was difficult. Here I was used to being in a semi-adult situation and they wanted to treat me like I was 17 and just leaving for college." Subsequent trips home and a) ummers have left Behm, who will transfer to the University of Houston in the spring, with a greater appreciation of family. "I appreciate now, how good my family is," she says. "At school, I see so many people who don't have what I have."

Lesley Ann Mitchell writes for Gannett News Service in Washington, D.C.) ©Copyright 1990, USA TODAY/Apple College Information Network



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Where's Mom when you need her?

by Kim Painter

Go ahead; button up that overcoat when the wind blows free. But don't expect it to keep you from catching a cold. "You catch a cold from a virus. You don't catch a cold through cold weather," says Dr. Elliot Dick of the University of Wisconsin — debunking a piece of motherly wisdom that cold experts debunk every year. They have gone so far as to give viruses to volunteers left cold and wet outside for hours and found they get no more ill than people who stay warm and snug inside. Not that Mom is all wrong. Experts agree colds are more common in fall and winter, but they blame indoor crowding - especially in schools and day-care centers, where most viruses get a foothold before spreading to adults. Another possibility is that dry indoor air irritates the nose and throat, creating a virus-friendly environment. Once sick, experts and Mom say you should: - Drink hot liquids. It feels good on a scratchy throat, might briefly clear up your nose and will keep you from getting dehydrated. Chicken soup, though,

is probably no more magical than tea. - Rest, especially if you have a fever, which probably means you have the flu rather than a cold, especially if you have a headache, too. — Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze. As Mom would remind you, it's polite and some evidence suggests you will spread fewer viruses. But toss away that already gooey handkerchief, which could be full of viruses. Use a tissue and throw it away. - Make sure everyone in your home washes their hands frequently. Some experts think viruses piggyback from hands to noses How about those home remedies such as garlic, ginger ale or hot onion juice? "If your mama told you it would help and you believe it will help, it probably will," says Dr. Owen Hendley of the University of Virginia. He says 40 percent of subjects feel better when they get a placebo that they think is a cold potion. @Copyright 1990, USA TODAY/Apple College Information Network (Kim Painter writes for USATO-

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