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In partnership with Kennesaw State University, the Cobb Collaborative and KSU's Wellstar College and Children and Family Programs have released the Sharpen App to provide mental health resources and community for student-parents.

Dr. Allison Garefino, clinical director of KSU's Children and Family Programs, recognized the additional challenges that students face when going through school with a child or children. Managing the day-to-day balancing act of class, homework, studying, papers, work, and personal life is all the more difficult when you must also care for the well-being and success of children. Twenty percent of undergraduate students are parents themselves, but most colleges and universities lack the necessary support and care to help those students thrive.

In response to this, the Cobb Collaborative launched the Sharpen App for Kennesaw State University as a way to improve access to resources in the community that support student-parents. The app provides various tools to help students succeed in college, find work-life balance, and create an environment where the whole family can thrive. The app also serves as a community where student-parents can connect with one another while making their concerns known to university staff so they can better serve their students. One mom of a 7-year-old said, "I have had such an incredible response from KSU support services and truly feel like there is a pathway up and out of this situation."

A huge factor in student-parent success is a family-friendly environment on campus. With the Sharpen App, students can tap into Kennesaw State's robust services in one concise platform. Students can also schedule drop-in sessions with Dr. Garefino to learn behavioral parenting strategies and booster sessions with advocate teams to gain individualized support. These sessions cover a variety of topics such as accessible childcare, time management, self-care, financial aid/scholarships, and on-/off-campus resources.

Download the Sharpen App today at bit.ly/3vzXcPn. For more information on the Sharpen App or student-parent resources, please contact Dr. Allison Garefino, clinical director of KSU's Children and Family Programs, via email at cfpinfo@kennesaw.edu.

The Cobb Collaborative is a membership of non-profit organizations, local government, businesses, faith-based organizations, educational institutions, professional organizations, associations, and citizens who share ideas, expertise, and resources to improve outcomes for children and families in Cobb.