

Helping Boys & Girls Learn

Vol 9 - Issue 4HS

Parenting for Success in High School

Young People And The Media

Over a seven day week, the amount of time young people use media is the equivalent of a full-time job, with a few extra hours thrown in for overtime (44 1/2 hours a week). Indeed, given that about a quarter (26%) of the time young people are using media, they're using more than one medium at a time (reading and listening to music, for example), they are actually exposed to the equivalent of 81 1/2 hours a day (8:33) of media content, even though they pack that into less than 6 1/2 hours of time.

The 6-1/2 hours a day devoted to media compares to about 2-1/4 hours spent hanging out with parents, almost 1-1/2 hours spent in physical activity each day, just under one hour spent doing homework, and about 1/2 hour spent doing chores (data on homework and chores were collected among 7th to 12th graders." (Source: Kaiser Family Foundation)

Many young people have to go no further than **their own bedrooms** to access these media.

- 68% have a TV in their bedroom
- 54% have a VCR/DVD player
- 49% have a video game player
- 31% have a computer



Boys are more likely than girls to have a:

- TV (72% vs. 64%)
- VCR (59% vs. 49%)
- Video game console (63% vs. 33%)
- Computer (35% vs. 26%) in their bedroom

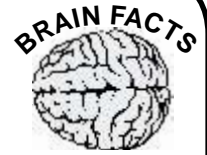
So What??

Young people who grow up in TV-oriented homes or with TVs or game consoles in their bedrooms spend more time watching TV and playing video games, and less time reading and doing homework.

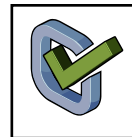
About half of all 8- to 18-year-olds say their families have no rules about TV watching.

Parents who impose rules and stick to them get results, at least in terms of how much time young people devote to media. Kids in homes with TV rules report almost two hours less daily media exposure than kids from homes without rules.

Read the Report at: <http://www.kff.org/entmedia/>



The cerebellum, larger in the male brain, was once believed to be mainly involved in coordinator of muscles, making us graceful dancers and good athletes. But it also is involved in coordinating our "mental muscles." For teens, the cerebellum seems to help coordinate the complicated social life that accompanies adolescence. Physical activity helps healthy development of the cerebellum. Encourage your teen to engage in lots of physical activity, in school and out. Both boys and girls should have lots of opportunity to be involved in sports in high school, and have regular PE classes. (PS: Text messaging is not physical activity, except for the hands!)



Check This Out

Resources for Parents

Websites:

<http://www.talkingwithkids.org/local.html>
Here's a site with links to all kinds of tough topics, including sex, violence, drugs and more.

Book:

Get Out of My Life, but First Could You Drive Me & Cheryl to the Mall: A Parent's Guide to the New Teenager

by Anthony E. Wolfe

A survival guide for parents who find themselves marooned among volatile and incomprehensible aliens on Planet Teen.

April is Stress Awareness Month

Dealing With High School Stress



Did you have a stressful day? Your teen may have, too. Aside from the typical demands of homework and chores, some high school students may be bothered by:

- Problems with friends.
- Family issues.
- Being overly self-critical.
- Too many extracurricular activities.
- Unrealistic expectations of themselves.

It's important that your child learn to manage his/her stress level. Kids who cope poorly with stress can become anxious, withdrawn, ill or aggressive. Boys tend to act out when they are stressed, often in physical ways. Girls tend to turn their stress inward which can lead to depression. Try these messages to help your teenager reduce his or her stress:

“Put your body in motion”

Moving from the chair to the couch while watching TV is not being physically active! Physical activity is one of the most important ways to keep stress away by clearing the head and lifting the spirits. Physical activity also increases endorphin levels – the natural "feel-good" chemicals in the body that leave you with a naturally happy feeling.

Whether your teen likes full-fledged games of football, tennis, or roller hockey, or prefers walks with family and friends, it's important to get up, get out, and get moving!



“Fuel up”

If your body was a car, you wouldn't take it for a long drive without filling up the gas tank first. Likewise, begin each day by eating breakfast to get the energy needed to tackle the day. Eating regular meals (this means no skipping meals) and taking time to enjoy them (eating in the car on the way to practice doesn't count) will make you feel better too.



Make sure to fuel up with fruits, vegetables, proteins (peanut butter, a chicken sandwich, or a tuna salad) and grains (wheat bread, pasta, or some crackers) – these will provide the power needed to make it through hectic days.

Don't be fooled by the jolt of energy received from sodas and sugary snacks – this only lasts a short time, and once it wears off, the body may feel sluggish and more tired than usual. For that extra boost of energy to sail through history notes, math class, and after school activities, grab a banana, some string cheese, or a granola bar for some power-packed energy!



“Catch some Zzz's”

Fatigue is a best friend to stress. When you don't get enough sleep, you may feel tired, cranky, or you may have trouble thinking clearly. When you're overtired, a problem may seem much bigger than it actually is. You may have a hard time doing a school assignment that usually seems easy, you don't do your best in sports or any physical activity, or you may have an argument with your friends over something really stupid.

Sleep is a big deal! Getting the right amount of sleep is especially important for kids your age. Most teens need between 8.5 and just over 9 hours of sleep each night. Because your body (and mind) is changing and developing, it requires more sleep to re-charge for the next day. So don't resist, get those zzz's!

How Important Are Parents To The Success of High School Students?

Research confirms it: Parents are extremely important to the success of their high school age students. Exactly how?



Perception of Parent Expectations impacts Student Expectations = Achievement

The further in school parents believe their adolescents will go and the better the adolescents understand those expectations, the higher their own academic expectations will be and the higher their academic achievement will be.

Perception of Parent Expectations + Time Spent on Homework = Achievement

The further in school parents believe their adolescents will go and the better the adolescents understand those expectations, the more time they tend to spend on homework and the higher their academic achievement.



High educational expectations provide a powerful way through which parents can continuously encourage the educational attainments of their adolescents in high school and beyond.



Many parents might be surprised to learn that research shows that they have a strong influence on their teenagers.

So what are some good strategies for helping adolescent boys and girls understand parent's expectations and translating those expectations into academic achievement?

Be very clear about your expectations about behavior. **Boys this age tend to love novelty and take more risks than girls.** That includes "academic risks" like not turning in homework, waiting until the night before a test to read material - the kinds of risks that can result in poor grades and even failure. Support your son's interests in non-academic activities, but make sure he clearly understands the you expect him to do his best with his studies.



During high school years girls are very open to the influence of positive female role models. **Make sure you expose your daughter to women who can show her the kinds of options she has for the future.** It's important for her to see possibilities she may not experience in her day to day world. Talk to her about what she dreams about for her future and then show her how education can help her attain those dreams.



With both your boys and girls, remember that high school is a really important time to **know your kid's friends and their parents.** While it makes teenagers crazy to have their parents checking up on them, it can protect them and their future when caring parents bond together into a village. All the adults watch out for all the kids, and the kids know (yeah, they'll admit it later) that the adults in their life really do care about them!

Happy Birthday Public Libraries



The first public library (supported by citizen's taxes) in the United States opened in 1833 at Peterborough, New Hampshire. In addition to the libraries in nearly every community across the country, no matter how small, there is a great virtual library resource for your high school age student! **Boys might especially enjoy this trip to the library!**

The **Internet Pubic Library for Teens** can be found at <http://www.ipl.org/div/aplus/>. The site has a convenient service called **Ask A Question** in which dedicated online volunteers answers reference questions for visitors to the site.

The **Teen Space** link has sections titled:

Homework Help: resources related to school, jobs, and getting the education help you need.

A+ Writing: Step by step help for writing a first-class research paper.

Frequently Asked Embarrassing Questions: such as "What medications help with acne?" and "What should you do if your friend is saying racist things?"



A Poetry Wiki: where you can express yourself and share with other poets.

This is a **monitored site** so parents can be comfortable knowing their teens are using a resource that is really helpful and also safe!

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Scorpions

by *Walter Dean Myers*

Jamal, who is pressured to become leader of the Scorpions gang, worries about school, family, and the rough kids on the street. When a fellow gang member gives him a gun, Jamal suddenly gains a new level of respect from his enemies. A realistic look at a boy who wants to do the right thing but gets caught up in the culture of violence.

Rats Saw God

by *Rob Thomas*

In order to pass English class and graduate, 18-year-old Steve York has to write a 100-page essay about his life. What sounds like a run-of-the-mill writing assignment, however, becomes an excuse for Steve to reflect on the last four years (from Texas freshman to California senior), and figure out where it all went wrong.

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What If . . . Everyone Knew Your Name

by *Liz Ruckdeschel*

Meet Haley Miller. She's a 15-year-old girl of average height, average weight, and an average sense of style. Installed in her first public high school, Haley faces the toughest choices of her young life. And guess what? She's all yours. In this interactive novel, readers lead Haley through the halls of Hillsdale High for better or for worse.

Teen Idol

by *Meg Cabot*

Jenny is always smoothing things over. She's the perfect person to write the "Ask Annie" column for the school paper. When Hollywood heartthrob Luke Striker poses as a student to research a role, Clayton High won't ever be the same, least of all Jenny.