

Helping Boys & Girls Learn

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Parenting for Success in High School



9th Grade Attendance Rates Predict High School Graduation!

What are the best predictors of whether a ninth-grader will graduate from high school on time? According to current research: attendance and grade point average.

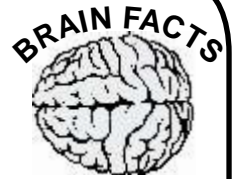
Students who miss less than a week (5 days) per semester were much more likely to graduate in four years. Students who miss 10 days per semester were less than half as likely to graduate on time, and missing 20 or more days dropped the chance of graduating to less than 10%! When you aren't at school, your grades will suffer.

How can parents support their 9th graders? Remember that your 9th graders need nearly as much supervision and monitoring as your 8th grader did! Just because he or she is in "high school" now doesn't change the need for parents to keep an eye on homework, friends, a healthy diet, good sleep patterns—all the things you monitored with your middle school child.

Be involved in your 9th grader's school—high school parents tend to volunteer less, attend activities less, generally just aren't around as much as when kids are younger—**be one of the exceptions**. Showing interest in your child's school life may increase your child's interest.

And get to know your child's teachers and administrators—they will be your biggest allies when you and your child need help navigating the wonderful and challenging new world of high school. They share your dream of seeing your child in a cap and gown on graduation day.

Blood Flow in the Brain

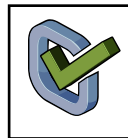


Blood flow can be up to 20% greater in the female brain. In conjunction with the increased neural connectivity between the left and right side of the female brain, this additional blood flow adds more potential for information to move quickly between areas of the brain.

What does this mean?

Moving information more quickly in the brain may mean that girls "talk before they think." Slowing down this process may be hard for adolescent girls, but trying to slow down may help minimize conflict between peers (and parents and teachers!). If adults keep this "speed" in mind, they too can take things less personally and realize this speedy process is part of a girls' biology and maturity (which comes later) will help!

Source: *Strategies for Teaching Boys & Girls: Secondary*
The Gurian Institute



Check This Out

Resources for Parents

Website:

To help parents help teens maintain a healthy body image!

<http://archives.cnn.com/2000/HEALTH/children/06/09/body.image.wmd/index.html>

Teens and the TV...

By the time they graduate from high school, kids will have spent 20,000 hours in front of the television set compared to 15,000 in the classroom.

Adolescence is particularly a time of turmoil and change. In early adolescence, as never before, both boys and girls are aware of tremendous bodily changes and emotional stress. There is a search for identity; a quest for role models. Too many boys and girls both find positive male role models missing from their daily lives. Increasingly teenagers turn to TV for answers and often come away more confused and with more distorted perceptions than ever. The role models and stereotypes they see in popular shows aren't always the ones we would like them to follow in their own lives.

There is an obvious need to teach our children to look at TV with a discriminating eye: to question reality as portrayed by TV.

You can help lessen the negative effects of TV if you:

- * watch your teens' favorite shows with them and see how they are reacting to the characters
- * use television as a springboard for talking about topics such as sex, AIDS, smoking, drug and alcohol use, divorce and peer pressure
- * talk about what you find objectionable on TV, and ask their opinions
- * encourage teens to analyze and question what they see on TV
- * steer kids towards diverse, good quality programming such as science shows, documentaries, news, realistic teen dramas
- * watch music videos with your kids and discuss the often-sexist images of women and the representations of masculinity



Warning Signs of Video Game Addiction

Can you always control your kid's video gaming activity?

According to the Center for On-Line Addiction, warning signs for video game addiction include:



Playing for increasing amounts of time

Thinking about playing games while doing other activities

Playing games to escape from real-life problems, anxiety, or depression

Lying to friends and family to conceal how much time is spent playing games

Feeling irritable when trying to cut down on playing games

If you're concerned your child may be addicted to video games, don't dismiss it as a phase. Keep a record of the child's game playing behavior, including:

Logs of when/how long the child plays
Problems resulting from game playing
How the child reacts to time limits

Computers have become an important part of everyday life, as well as many jobs, so compulsive gamers can't just look the other way when they see a PC.

"It's like a food addiction," Young explains. "You have to learn to live with food."

SOURCE: Kimberly Young, PsyD, clinical director, Center for On-Line Addiction; professor of psychology, St. Bonaventure University; and author, Caught in the Net: How to Recognize the Signs of Internet Addiction -- and a Winning Strategy for Recovery.

Things That Affect High School Students



Research indicates that adolescents aged 13 to 22 need just over nine hours of sleep each night. When puberty

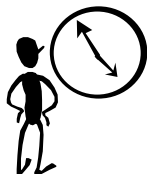
hits, the body's production of sleep-inducing melatonin is delayed, making an early bedtime biologically impossible for most teens. At the same time, after-school sports and jobs and early school start times put the squeeze on a full night's sleep (*Brown Medical School, Rhode Island*).

Given this research, what can parents do to help sleep-deprived teens??



Eliminate sleep-stealing caffeinated drinks in the fridge. The best bedtime snack is one that has both complex carbohydrates and protein, and perhaps some calcium. Calcium helps the brain use the snack to produce melatonin which helps the body calm down for sleep. Dairy products like milk & cheese are good choices, as are peanuts or sunflower seeds!

The body's circadian system is sensitive to light, so remove TVs or computers from the teen's bedroom and curtail their use at least an hour before bedtime.



Have a reasonable curfew for phone calls on school nights.

Try to help your teen maintain a consistent sleep cycle by not encouraging excessive late nights on the weekends just because they don't have to get up for school – the body's system needs a consistent routine.

The influence of peers — whether positive or negative — is of critical importance in your adolescent's life. Whether you like it or not, the opinions of your child's peers often carry more weight than yours. A boy's academic performance can be negatively affected if he finds himself an outsider and low in the pecking order of his peers.

At its best, peer pressure can

- focus your teen's energy
- provide motivation for success
- encourage healthy behavior

Peers can and do

- act as positive role models
- demonstrate appropriate social behaviors
- listen and understand the frustrations, challenges, and concerns associated with being a teenager



Parents can support positive peer relationships by giving their teenagers their love, time, boundaries, and encouragement to think for themselves.

Have a positive relationship with your teen.

Be genuinely interested in your teen's activities.

Encourage independent thought and expression.

Get to know the friends of your teen and get to know their parents.

Make sure that your teen knows that he or she is loved and valued as an individual at home.

