

Parents Still Make the Difference!



Teach your teen how to show respect at home and at school

Teenagers spend a lot of time speaking to their friends. They often use slang and joke around with one another. And more often than not, they may slip into this attitude when speaking to teachers or other classmates, not realizing that it is possibly disrespectful.

Teens need to think about being respectful--and it's up to you to show your teen how to do so. Your teen can show respect through:

- How he speaks. Your teen should speak slowly, clearly and calmly. He should also address people properly by saying "yes, sir," or "yes, ma'am," or using their titles, such as "yes, Officer." And of course, using the magic words--please and thank you--is always a great way to show respect.
- His body language. Smiling, nodding and making eye contact show someone that they are being respected. Your teen should also sit or stand up straight and avoid crossing his arms or rolling his eyes.
- His overall attitude. By not interrupting others, your teen shows his respect. He should also keep his cool even when he disagrees with what someone is saying. Valuing another's thoughts and beliefs--even if they differ from your own--is a big sign of respect.

If your teen uses these methods to show respect, he'll be respected in turn by teachers, fellow students, friends and family.

Studies show sleep impacts your teen's learning and memory

For years, researchers thought that the older people get, the less sleep they need. But recently, they have discovered that it simply isn't true--especially when it comes to teenagers. Teenagers actually need as much sleep as young children!

Teenagers need about nine hours of sleep each night, but most high school students only get about seven. This is a concern because lack of sleep affects learning and memory--which in turn affects teens' school success.

Of course, it's important to get a good night's sleep before a test. But it's equally important to get a good night's sleep after learning something new. While sleeping, the brain categorizes the new information and makes it easier to remember.

To help your teen get enough sleep, suggest that she:

- Stick to a routine bedtime. Experts suggest 10 p.m. Tell her to dim the lights about an hour before bed to get her body ready to sleep.
- Make her room "sleep friendly." Keep the temperature cool. Turn off all music. Keep the computer and TV out of her room. Place her cell phone and charger in the kitchen at night.
- Don't oversleep on weekends. If your teen usually gets up at 6 a.m. on weekdays, don't let her sleep till noon on Saturdays. That extra sleep confuses the body. One to two hours of extra sleep is plenty.

Encourage your teenager to evaluate what she reads online

Where does your teen get the news of the world (or your neighborhood)? Odds are, she's reading it online.

Studies show that teens prefer to learn about the news by visiting online news sites. More than six in 10 teens say they go online to find out about current events.

Of course, not all online news sites are created equal. Some present the news in a balanced way. Others have a clear point of view. Be sure your teen understands which is which.

You may also want to:

- Share some websites you like to visit. Ask your teen to show you where she gets her news.
- Make comparisons. Watch a news story on a television news show. Then go online to read how the story is covered.