

★ Ideas for Parents

Make Sure That School Attendance is a Family Priority

Missing just one or two sessions of a class can start a downward spiral. What can you do?

Here are some tips:
Limit late-night hours to the weekend.
School is your teen's most important job.

Make sure your teen has an alarm clock with a loud alarm.

Stress why your teen needs to get to school on time. No employer will let him show up just whenever he feels like it.

Peer Pressure Can Often Be More Positive Than Negative

Peer pressure has a bad name. Parents worry that their children may engage in dangerous behavior, such as drinking and doing drugs, all in the name of "fitting in." Of course negative peer pressure exists. And it's important for parents to help children learn to fight it. But another kind of peer pressure the positive kind—can have many benefits for your child.

Here are some things your child can gain from "positive peer pressure."

Responsible behavior. Not all teens spend weekends getting into trouble. Many spend time doing things with their families, playing sports, babysitting, engaging in hobbies or reading. A typical weekend for your child's friends will probably become a typical weekend for your child, too.

Self-esteem. Many of the things teens do because of peer pressure are not harmful. They may all like a certain hairstyle or the latest pop band. Being like other kids makes them feel they belong—and that is a very important feeling to an adolescent.

Connection to school. Kids don't always fall in with the "wrong crowd." Very often they fall in with the "right crowd"—one that cares about schoolwork, participates in activities, and tries to succeed. Such friends can motivate your child.

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