

➤ On The Right Track

THE NEWSLETTER FOR FAMILIES, STUDENTS, AND SCHOOLS USING SCHOOL SPECIALTY PLANNING & STUDENT DEVELOPMENT PLANNERS

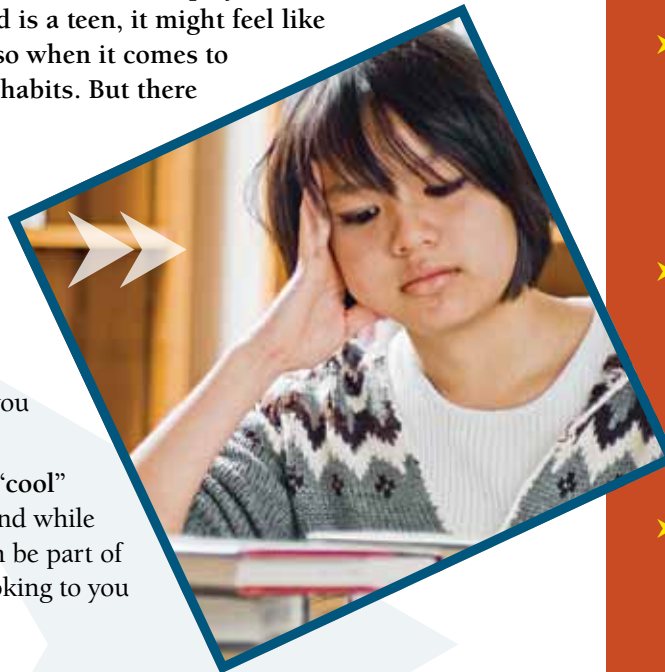
➤➤ HABITS

➤➤ BUILDING GOOD HABITS

Remember when your child's life was filled with play dates and jungle gyms? Now that your child is a teen, it might feel like life is a lot more complicated, also when it comes to helping your child develop good habits. But there are still many things you can do!

Establish clear boundaries.

- Establish and enforce clear boundaries for your teen—in consultation with your teen when appropriate. Remember, if you don't stick to the rules you set, your teen won't take you seriously.
- Don't worry about being the "cool" parent. You have a job to do and while being a friend to your teen can be part of parenting, your teen is still looking to you for guidance!



Stay connected.

- Don't become disconnected from your teen's habits. Adolescence is a hard time for teens. Your teen needs you to watch his or her back.
- Speak to your teen with respect. Show that you expect to be able to have mature discussions together.
- Be aware of who your teen is hanging out with, monitor his or her progress in school, and watch for changes in his or her mood or actions that could signal that he or she is dealing with a problem.

Acknowledge effort.

- Look for opportunities to give positive reinforcement—it encourages your teen to keep up his or her good habits.
- When your teen makes an effort to break a negative habit, acknowledge the change by giving him or her more freedom, when appropriate.

Getting the right amount of sleep is important for your teen. However, your teen may not be logging enough zzz's to get the job done. Help your teen rise and shine!

- **Establish a sleep-friendly environment.** If your teen's room is a calm, cozy, and warm environment, he or she will be more likely to actually sleep there!
- **Get your teen to "unplug"**—this means no texting, no computer, no video games and no iPod after a certain time in the evening. Enforce this to give your teen time to relax and quiet time to think.
- **Encourage healthy eating.** Both what your teen eats and when he or she eats has a big effect on your teen's ability to fall asleep and to sleep well.
- **Cut time off your teen's morning routine** by creating good bedtime and morning wake-up routines! For example, encourage your teen to pre-make his or her lunch the night before to avoid some of that morning craziness!