



The CHAMPION

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Friends' Parents Can Sway Teens' Odds for Drinking & Smoking

Everyone knows teen behavior is highly influenced by their friends, but a new study finds even a friend's parents can influence whether or not a teen drinks alcohol or uses drugs. If the parents of your teen's friends are unaware of their teen's drug or alcohol use, or worse, condone it, that may make your child more likely to partake as well, the study found.

"Among friendship groups with 'good parents' there's a synergistic effect -- if your parents are consistent and aware of your whereabouts, and your friends' parents are also consistent and aware of their children's whereabouts, then you are less likely to use substances," study author Michael Cleveland, research assistant professor at Penn State University, said in a university news release. "But if you belong to a friendship group whose parents are inconsistent, and your parents are consistent, you're still more likely to use alcohol." The study is published in the May issue of the Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs.

Researchers surveyed about 9,000 ninth-graders from rural school districts about their closest friends, their parents' discipline and if their parents knew who their friends were. After questioning the teens, the researchers identified nearly 900 different groups of friends, each made up of about 10 to 11 teenagers. One year later, the teens were surveyed again about their use of alcohol, cigarettes and marijuana.

Teens whose parents were consistent in their discipline and generally knew what their children were up to were less likely to use drugs or alcohol. However, even if parents were consistent and aware of their teen's activities, some of that protection was erased if their friends' parents were more lenient or clueless.

"The peer context is a very powerful influence. We've found in other studies that the peer aspect can overwhelm your upbringing," Cleveland said. (Health Day News, 2012)



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Our Vision
"Choose to be
Chemical Free"

Our Mission:
Is to improve and
enhance the health,
safety, and quality of
life for our children
and community by
reducing substance
use and abuse.





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Fast Fact

Be Creative!

Studies show that young people's involvement in creative activities is associated with higher self-esteem, increased motivation and higher achievement.

Scales, P.C., & Leffert, N. (1999). *Developmental assets: A synthesis of the scientific research on adolescent development*, Minneapolis: Search Institute, p. 100.

We're on the web!
www.champforwc.org

What's Coming Up...



Wadena Memorial Auditorium, 'Peter Pan' – July 13-14, 2012
Verndale School Auditorium, 'Robin Hood' -7pm, July 20-21, 2012
National Night Out, Sebeka, Sebeka Schools, August 7, 2012
National Night Out, Menahga City Park– 5-7pm, August 7, 2012

Encourage Summer Reading

Summer allows for many activities we might not have the opportunity to participate in during the winter months. More people are active in outdoor activities including bicycling, swimming, walking, baseball/softball, etc. As students take a break from school, we also want to encourage reading for pleasure to become a source of enjoyment and it also helps students retain their learning skills for the next school year. Children learn best by example. Be sure that your children see you reading and writing.

- Visit bookstores and the public library regularly to find materials for pleasure reading.
- Write letters to your teen. Compliment him/her when she has done something well. Use cards and notes to let her know how proud you are of her accomplishments.
- Keep a diary, journal or log together and share reflections with your teen.
- Think about creating a family journal, scrap book or photo album when on family vacations. Use funny captions or anecdotes above photographs to remember family events.
- Ask your teen to write letters, shopping lists, invitations and to-do lists.
- Play spelling and language games — like Scrabble, Boggle or Trivial Pursuit — and look for the correct spelling and meaning of words.
- Read together as a family and discuss what everyone is reading. Be sure to discuss newspaper articles, television and radio news coverage, journals and magazines that are interesting to your teen.
- Remind your teen that sometimes adults have "homework" to do as well (i.e., reading reports, doing performance appraisals, etc.). This will allow him to see the connection of reading to real life.

Remember it is good to be active too, so allowing time for sports and play is important. Encouraging physical activity and encouraging teens to read promote healthy development and learning skills that can be carried into adulthood.

Something To Try And Talk About

In every issue!

Here are some ideas for conversations at your next family meal or ride in the car.

- What is the first thing you notice about a person? Why?

- If you could trade places with anyone in the world who would it be and why?
- Which sense is the most important: sight, hearing, touch, smell or taste? Why?

The benefits of eating together will last long after your meal ends, especially if you make family mealtimes a regular activity.
<http://family.samhsa.gov/get/mealtime.aspx>