

# PARENT RESOURCE CENTER BULLETIN

January—February 2009

What makes up a functional family? In fact, what is the definition of family? No matter what the family makeup, the key is support: A family should be nurturing, provide emotional support and a sense of safety; parents should educate and families should communicate. Every family has some sort of discord; it is how the problems are resolved that is critical.

## Are you missing key opportunities to connect with your teen?

New research from the Partnership for a Drug-Free America and MetLife Foundation shows that many parents who don't use e-mail or text messaging to communicate with their teens may be missing important opportunities to connect with their kids about drug and alcohol use. The national survey of more than 1,000 teens and 1,000 parents confirmed that while a majority of teens would rather have a face-to-face conversation with their parents about alcohol or drugs, **nearly one in four (23 percent) say they would prefer to have a "serious conversation" about this issue using e-mail or cell phone.** However, just **three percent of parents** would opt to communicate with their kids this way.

"Parents who are waiting for the "right time" to talk with their kids about drugs and alcohol may be missing everyday opportunities to connect

on this important issue, said Steve Pasierb, president and CEO of the Partnership. "While nothing can take the place of an in-person conversation between parents and teens, for some parents, emails, cell phone conversations, and even texting can help start a conversation with a reluctant teen and reinforce talks you've already had—plus, parents can reach teens at times when use tends to be likelier—after school, on weekends and during unsupervised time."

The survey underscores that "Generation Text" has arrived — when asked which was more important for everyday communication with friends, texting or social networking; **teens were far more likely to rely on texting (63 percent) than sites like Facebook (38 percent).** And teens don't only want to hear from their friends. **A majority of teens — 67 percent — were open to receiving texts from their parents after school** —a time when teens are most likely to be unsupervised. For many parents, texting may be an additional tool for monitoring and stay-

ing in touch with teens.

"Some parents may still feel apprehensive about embracing technology as a way of communicating with their children," said Sibyl Jacobson, president and CEO of MetLife Foundation. "But, in today's world, it is vital that parents connect with their kids in any way possible. Our work with the Partnership allows us to highlight important health issues like adolescent alcohol and drug abuse and continue to empower parents to recognize the important influence they have in their children's lives."

For parents who are reluctant or simply don't know how to send text messages, the Partnership has created a downloadable guide called "Time To Text." The tool is available for free at [TimeToTalk.org](http://TimeToTalk.org), and gives parents quick and easy tips on how to text, suggests different messages they can send to teens and provides a cheat sheet to keep in their wallet.

Source: *Parenting Teens Resource Network* — [www.parentingteensresourcenetwork.org](http://www.parentingteensresourcenetwork.org)



### Mark your CALENDAR



#### February

**4**—NC Parent Network Workshop: Where Do I Turn? Charlotte, NC  
Western NC Center for Prevention Resources (host)

**22-25**—NCFADS Winter School Clemmons, NC  
[www.ncfads.org](http://www.ncfads.org)

**25-27**—Safe and Drug-Free Schools Conference Raleigh, NC  
[www.ncpublicschools.org](http://www.ncpublicschools.org)

#### March

**11-13**—EAP Conference Concord, NC  
[www.eapa.com](http://www.eapa.com)

**25**—NC Parent Network Workshop: Where Do I Turn?  
Host: Eastern Center for Prevention Resources

#### April

#### Alcohol Awareness Month!

**21-22**—5th Annual NC Parent Network Conference  
"Collaborating for Change: Better Tools, More Knowledge, Greater Power"  
Burlington, NC

## A New Years Resolution for Parents

Teens learn to be stressed-out from, ahem, us - their well-intentioned parents who want only the best for our beloved children. But that constant pressure to get good grades, get into a good college, and succeed at all costs makes kids believe that self-worth is measured by GPA. They focus on their deficiencies, and never stop to enjoy their successes.

It's always about what comes next, never what is. We've been raised to believe that every achievement we earn is simply a stepping stone to the next level of success. We chase the gold stars and buy into m y t h s .

Kids learn to manage stress by observing their workaholic parents ... who work 24/7 and never take a break. Or if you do take a break, you feel guilty about it. Kids look to parents for cues on how to balance work and fun. Show them that you love yourselves enough to make time for self-care.

A suggestion for this New Year's resolution: while we're working on helping your children de-stress their lives, model some of those healthy habits yourselves, the ones you want your teens to learn – get enough exercise, eat healthily, sleep enough, and, ditch the 'inner perfectionist.' Balance work and play. Have fun. You owe it to your kids.

Source: *About.com Guide to Young Adults*, by Jackie Burrell

## DON'T MISS UPCOMING SHOWS ON CADCA TV!

PARTNERSHIP POWER: ANTI-DRUG GROUPS & LAW ENFORCEMENT  
January 29, 2009, 1-2pm EST

CHANGING THE WORLD AROUND US: ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES  
March 26, 2009, 1-2pm EST

MANAGING THE ANTI-DRUG MESSAGE  
May 28, 2009, 1-2pm EST

THE WAR WITHIN: HELPING RETURNING VETERANS  
July 23, 2009, 1-2pm EST



[www.cadca.org](http://www.cadca.org)



### Tips for Keeping Up With Your Teen's World...

- Pick up your teen's mp3 player and go to the "Top 25 Most Played" section. Listen for references to alcohol, drugs, or other risky behaviors. Then talk with your teen about what you heard.
- Visit social networking sites like MySpace.com, and browse the profiles of teens your child's age to see what they say, what their interests are, and what they are doing online.
- Can you name your teen's favorite TV show? Watch it with him or her and discuss story lines.
- Go to a video sharing Web site and type in "smoking weed." Watch some of the videos. Did you know that your teen may be exposed to these images?
- Find out what the drug slang terms "blazed," "xanibars," "a blunt" and "robotripping" really mean.
- Type the name of your teen's high school into the search bar of a popular teen social networking site and browse the profiles.

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[www.familiesinaction.org](http://www.familiesinaction.org)



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