

## Motivate your teen to stay focused as school year ends

The end of the school year is in sight—and many teens might already be mentally checked out, spending more time daydreaming about afternoons at the pool than learning pre-calculus. Help your teen remain focused throughout these last weeks of school—especially for important end-of-year exams. Here's how you can help your teen stay engaged in school:

- **Offer to help your teen study.** She can't slack off on memorizing the dates of important Civil War battles if you're the one holding the flashcards. You don't have to be a trained teacher to help your teen study—ask to see her class notes and then together use them to make up questions for review.
- **Keep asking about school.** Just hearing you talk about it will remind your teen that school should be as important to her as it is to you. Your interest could be the boost she needs to keep her motivation high.
- **Tell your teen you're proud** of her. Talk about how much she has accomplished so far this year—and how you're confident that she'll be able to finish out the year in the same way.
- **Ask your teen's school** for the final exam schedule (if you haven't already). Make sure your teen gets a good night's sleep before test days and has a nutritious breakfast in the morning. Be sure to bake her a special treat to celebrate her hard work.

**Source:** "Secondhand smoke boosts teens' failure risks," Reuters Health, [www.ucsfhealth.org/adult/health\\_library](http://www.ucsfhealth.org/adult/health_library)

## Help your teen get a head start this summer

It's never too early for your teen to get a head start on his future. Talk to him about what he plans to do after graduation—even if it seems far away. Encourage him to use this summer to prepare for his future. If he plans to:

- **Attend college**—suggest that he research colleges he would like to attend. If he has his heart set on a certain school, see if he meets admission requirements. He could begin preparing for the SAT or ACT. Could he take a college-level course at a local community college?
- **Attend vocational school**—ask him if he is interested in a trade. Help him research program requirements. Is there an entrance exam? What schools offer the best programs?
- **Get a job**—encourage him to get a part-time job or internship in that field. The interviewing skills he will learn in the process are great practice. Encourage your teen to "shadow" adults in different fields to see which one most interests him.

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