

Teen Health Kit for Parents

✓ Keeping Your Teen Safe

It would be nice if teens came with owners' manuals. But, of course, they don't. Actually, that's part of the fun and challenge of parenting teens. Each one is unique. The best you can do as a parent is to try to guide your teen through the obstacle course of adolescence with love, firmness, patience and healthy role-modeling. It is extremely important to stay involved in your teenager's day-to-day life. Here are some tips for riding the adolescent wave together:

1. Openly discuss and role-play ways to handle temptations, such as peer pressure to have sex, drink, smoke and take drugs.
2. Talk about the dangers of handling guns.
3. Insist that your teen always use seat belts and wear one yourself.
4. Insist that your teen wear a helmet when cycling and appropriate protective gear when engaging in other sports, and do likewise.
5. Offer to pick up your teenager anywhere anytime — with no questions asked — if he or she is tempted to drive while high or drunk or is asked to ride in a car driven by an intoxicated friend.
6. Be alert for signs of drug use, depression, eating disorders and gang participation. If a problem seems too serious for you to handle alone, seek help from a health care professional, clergy member or a social service agency.
7. Help your kids understand how to "safely surf" the Internet and how to protect their privacy.

Sources: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control & the Nemours Foundation

Local Resources: Livingston County Youth Bureau
Livingston County Government Center, RM 105
Geneseo, NY 14454
585-243-7047 or 585-243-6909

Useful Web sites:

National Center for Injury Prevention and Control
www.cdc.gov/ncipc/default.htm



Genesee Valley Health Partnership, Inc.
Healthy Communities that Care
(585)748-5146
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