

DATA TRENDS

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This News Brief alerts you to a recently released report, *Raising Teens: A Synthesis of Research and a Foundation for Action*, by the Harvard Project on the Parenting of Adolescents.

Acknowledging the critical role that parents can play in the lives of adolescents, this 101-page report synthesizes "major research findings on the parenting of adolescents, with an emphasis on findings that have achieved widespread agreement among leaders in the field. Based on an analysis of over 300 recent reviews of research and practice, the report distills these findings into short, clear summaries and messages that can be conveyed to parents and others in parenting roles" (p. 5).

Authored by A. Rae Simpson, Ph.D., *Raising Teens* assumes that there is no "right" way to raise children. Rather, the report "attests to both the common ground that arises from honoring and understanding our shared experience and the differences that emerge from honoring and understanding parenting across cultures, circumstances, and individual styles" (p 30).

Copies of the report can be obtained by contacting the Harvard School of Public Health, 617/731-8184. The full report, as well as a 12-page summary, can be downloaded from the Internet at: <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/chc/parenting>

Highlights of the report include:

The Ten Tasks for Adolescents: A list of developmental tasks that teenagers need to undertake in order to make a successful transition to adulthood, and The Five Basics of Parenting Adolescents, outlined below:

The Five Basics of Parenting Adolescents

1) Love and Connect

Teens need parents to develop and maintain a relationship with them that offers support and acceptance, while accommodating and affirming the teen's increasing maturity.

2) Monitor and Observe

Teens need parents to be aware of--and let teens know they are aware of--their activities, including school performance, work experiences, after-school activities, peer relationships, adult relationships, and recreation, through a process that increasingly involves less direct supervision and more communication, observation, and networking with other adults.

3) Guide and Limit

Teens need parents to uphold a clear but evolving set of boundaries, maintaining important family rules and values, but also encouraging increased competence and maturity.

4) Model and Consult

Teens need parents to provide ongoing information and support around decision making, values, skills, goals, and interpreting and navigating the larger world, teaching by example and ongoing dialogue.

5) Provide and Advocate

Teens need parents to make available not only adequate nutrition, clothing, shelter, and health care, but also a supportive home environment and a network of caring adults.

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