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## Welcome to Parents & Caregivers!

The teen years can be an adventure and a transition for the whole family. For caregivers, it can be helpful to remember that young people with supportive family relationships and connection to school make better decisions in all areas of their lives. And, when families are connected to teens' school and community activities, youth are stronger, healthier and better able to live up to their full potential. Stay in touch by:

- Visit the secondary school website and read the daily newsletter
- Signing up for the school app if they have one
- Watch for family nights, parent-teacher night, drama productions, sporting & music events (consider attending as a family, whether your child plays or not!)
- Reach out to your PAC, the grade 8 counsellor and to SACY family engagement

Look for **SACY Parent & Family Engagement** parenting workshops around the district. We'll talk about staying connected, understanding typical social and emotional changes, and practical communication strategies to reduce tension at home and collaborate with our youth as they mature.

### Watch for the following workshops in your community:

#### **Building Bridges with your Teen**

We'll look at brain changes and the science behind teen behaviour. Share your insights, and together we'll explore practical ways to support healthy decision-making and developing capable young people.

#### **The Capacity Café**

Join volunteer youth for an evening to hear directly from young people about the stresses and pressures youth face ... and what adults can do to help.

#### **The SACY Adult Toolkit**

Join SACY and STEP facilitators for a non-judgmental and interactive evening to increase your health literacy in the area of adolescent development and substance use (cannabis, vaping, alcohol and ...)

For more information, visit our website, or email the parent engagement facilitator at your school:

Alexandra Wilson     [ajwilson@vsb.bc.ca](mailto:ajwilson@vsb.bc.ca)

Magee, Prince of Wales, David Thompson, Churchill,  
Kitsilano, U. Hill, Gladstone, Byng, Point Grey

Alina Jacob     [alina.jacob@vch.ca](mailto:alina.jacob@vch.ca)

Templeton, John Oliver, Tupper, Britannia, Windermere,  
Killarney, King George, Van Tech, Hamber

*P.S.: SACY Youth Engagement has lots of supports for students too...look us up at [www.vsb.bc.ca/SACY](http://www.vsb.bc.ca/SACY)*



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A partnership initiative of the  
 VANCOUVER SCHOOL BOARD  
Vancouver Coastal Health

...Thoughts shared from VSB grade 8 & 9 counsellors...

### **Guidelines for Setting Limits for your Grade 8 or 9 Teen**

Setting limits for your young teen is not always easy. Remembering teens need and want limits may give you the support you need when you start second guessing yourself. The following are intended as guidelines to be adapted to *your* family and the unique temperament of your teen. (Yes, yours is special.) Have a discussion. Let them know that safety is your concern, not "control".

- It's reasonable to expect a grade 8 student to tell parents where they are. If the plan changes, agree they check with you, and confirm transportation or curfew haven't changed.
- Grade 8 students should be home by dark on weekdays with adjusted weekend hours. Grade 8 students should not be 'hanging out' without a specified destination or activity.
- Ideally, grade 8 students should be driven by an adult for supervised activities after dark.
- Grade 8 students should only attend parties with adult supervision, only on the weekend.
- Homework might take up to 2 hours to complete. It's reasonable to limit TV, computer, games, or phone until it's finished. It's also okay to allow multi-tasking if work gets done.
- For many parents working later shifts, cell phones are a wonderful parenting tool. Remind your teen that the phone exists primarily for *your* benefit: they have a phone so that you can be in contact. Failure to answer or abusing the privilege can result in loss of use.
- Setting limits around technology means keeping the conversation going. Be open about why we all use technology. Share what you do and ask about what they do online.  
[www.thedoorthatsnotlocked.ca](http://www.thedoorthatsnotlocked.ca)
- Grade 8 students need about 9 hours of sleep per night—some need more. Try for consistent bedtimes. If weekend bedtimes run past midnight, you have a jetlagged student on Monday.
- Light from computers, tablets and phones stimulates the brain and makes our bodies respond as if it's day. Switch to calming rituals (shower, read, music) an hour before bed.
- Keep cell phones out of bedrooms at night. The temptation to text and talk to peers is intense. Model healthy behaviour: the family can put "phones to bed" in kitchen at night.
- Finally, if your teen in any grade was too sick to go to school today, they are too sick to go out this evening...even if they managed to pull it together for last period.

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Rules and limits are best if they are consistent. Allow your teen input into discussions, especially as they show responsibility. Be flexible and negotiate agreements, including their opinion on what will happen if they don't follow through. If you use "consequences," discuss them ahead of time. And remember: a consequence needs to be one that doesn't unreasonably tax you and your time, or you will find it hard to apply.