

Newsletter Insert #3

Positive Parenting Promotes Healthy Adolescent Behaviours

How important is it for parents of high school aged children to be closely involved with their children's day-to-day activities? As children transition from elementary to secondary school, communication between parents and school and parents and children often diminishes.

According to a recent national report, "*Improving the Health of Young Canadians*" (2005) by the Canadian Population Health Initiative, it is critical for parents to remain involved in their children's lives even as they move from childhood to young adulthood. "Higher levels of family connectedness and more positive relationships with parents are associated with a lower likelihood of engaging in unprotected sex, lower levels of teen pregnancy, less violence and substance use, less likelihood of experiencing emotional distress and higher self-rated health status."

"Adolescents with secure parental attachments are less likely to engage in drug use, excessive drinking, and risky sexual behaviours. They are also less likely to have mental health problems, weight-related concerns and eating disorders..."

How do parents support these secure attachments with their adolescents, especially when teen years can seem to make it even more difficult to be close to your kids?

Research suggests that parents:

- Be attentive, active listeners.
- Monitor behaviour, set limits.
- Negotiate rules and responsibilities.
- Accept individuality.
- Maintain 'connectedness' even when disagreeing on important issues.

To view this report in full, go to:

http://secure.cihi.ca/cihiweb/dispPage.jsp?cw_page=PG_380_E&cw_topic=380&cw_rel=AR_1217_E