

Healthy Teens

February 2020 Parent Newsletter



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Early Specialization in Sport

Sport is an important aspect of school life. The benefits of being active and participating on a team, or as an individual, are widespread. From increased positive mental and physical health, to greater social skills, athletes can gain a lot from participating in sport. However, even with so many benefits, there can be too much of a good thing. If an athlete spends too much time and energy in one sport, isolating them from friends and other opportunities, it can decrease their social and psychological growth.

In regards to physical health, specializing in one sport too early can limit the range of skills an athlete possesses and their overall motor skill development. This lack of skills and, often, a

lack of confidence, can potentially affect lifelong involvement in physical activity by discouraging the athlete from participating in other activities.

Lastly, early specialization in sport can actually change the way an athlete's body grows and develops because of increased stress on the body and repetitive injuries.

If your teen chooses to specialize early, pay attention to signs of burnout and isolation and talk with your teen and their coach about opportunities for cross training. Remember that having fun is an important factor to being active for life!

➤ For more information visit <http://canadiansportforlife.ca/parents>

One of the most common things that people identify as a benefit of smoking is stress relief. But did you know that many studies show that smoking can actually increase stress? What smoking does is relieve nicotine withdrawal symptoms, which can be stressful, but this is only short term.

Quitting is hard, but it is easier with help. You can call AlbertaQuits at 1-866-710-QUIT or visit www.AlbertaQuits.ca



Developmental Assets

Given the enormous responsibility that parents and caregivers have as major influences in a child's life it's normal to sometimes feel uncertain when it comes to raising your teens. The Search Institute has identified a list of 40 research-based, positive experiences and qualities that influence young people's development, helping them become caring, responsible, and productive adults. Below are examples of some developmental assets for you as a parent to consider and discuss with your teen.



- Supporting and loving your child – Do you and your teen communicate positively? Does your teen receive support from other non-parent adults?
- Empowering your child – Is your teen given useful roles in the community?
- Setting clear and realistic boundaries – Does your family have clear rules and consequences?
- Helping your teen use her or his time in meaningful, constructive ways – Does

your teen spend 3 or more hours per week in extra-curricular activities?

- Encouraging your teen to develop a lifetime commitment to learning – Does your teen want to do well in school?
- Instilling positive values in your teen – Does your teen place high value on helping other people? Does your teen tell the truth even when it's not easy?
- Developing social competencies in your teen – Does your teen know how

to plan ahead and make choices? Can they resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations?

- Encouraging your teen to form a positive identity– Does your teen feel good about themselves?

➤ For the full list of developmental assets and to learn more visit www.search-institute.org