



## Parents' Clipboard

SECONDARY LEVEL



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### The Reading Habits of Teens



According to recent studies (American Library Association), teenagers still prefer to read fiction, especially stories that highlight other adolescents and typical teenage situations, but the reading of nonfiction is on the rise. Mainstream magazines have recognized the interests of adolescent readers with such examples as *Teen People* and *National Geographic Kids*. The Internet may also provide some quality reading material. The YALSA (Young Adult Library Services Association) web site, *Teen Hoopla*, offers a comprehensive listing of electronic magazines, on-line publications, and communities for teenagers. Sites like [www.cyberteens.com](http://www.cyberteens.com) provide a creative outlet for reading, writing and art. (Of course, as with all types of reading, parents should monitor their student's activities online.) "Contrary to the common stereotype, many young adults do enjoy reading in their free time. Furthermore, their reading habits are positively influenced by outside reinforcement, mainly from parents and educators." (*Reading Today*, April/May 2003)

✓ **Remember!** *The dictionary is the only place where success comes before work.*



### Childhood Obesity on the Rise



As with most things in life, habits established early on set patterns that last a lifetime. A disturbing trend in the United States is the number of young people who are overweight. It is estimated that one-fourth of our students are over the boundary of healthy weight. "Rarely is a child's obesity due to a hormone imbalance or other underlying medical condition. Childhood obesity usually results from an imbalance between the number of calories consumed and the amount of calories expended. There is a well-established link between the amount of time children spend watching TV and their risk for future obesity. For example, preschool children who have a TV in their bedrooms are about 30% more likely to be overweight" (DCSD "The Wellness Connection", 3/2003). Good health contributes to a feeling of well-being and to the ability to learn in school. Be sure your student eats nutritious foods (avoid large quantities of fast foods!) and engages in adequate physical activity to maintain a healthy weight. If there are concerns about your adolescent's weight, consult your physician.

### 100 Ways for Parents to Be Involved in Their Child's Education

The National PTA has long promoted parent involvement in education. Research indicates higher student achievement for children whose parents take an active interest in their education. Below are just 10 ideas from the National PTA. To see all 100, visit their web site at [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org) or call 800-307-4782.

- 1 Share expectations and set goals together for your child.
- 2 Attend parent-teacher conferences with specific questions you want to ask.
- 3 Understand and reinforce school rules and expectations at home.
- 4 Meet your child's school friends and get to know their names.
- 5 Share your interests, talents and hobbies with your child.
- 6 Respond to school surveys.
- 7 Provide books and magazines for at home reading.
- 8 Learn representatives' backgrounds and participate in school board elections.
- 9 Visit your school's web site.
- 10 Share your family's culture, values, and parenting practices with your child's school.