

Bottom Line: Students who have strong family connections are happier, less stressed and have better relationships with both their peers and their teachers.

5. Be alert for signs of stress

Research says: Too much stress takes a mental, physical, and emotional toll.

Tips:

- The obvious signs are anxiousness, irritability, and tension.
- Less obvious signs can be tiredness, ambivalence, hopelessness, procrastination, and avoidance.
- Stressed students need coaching to:
 - a) realize the signs of stress in themselves and;
 - b) learn what to do about that stress.
- The only way students can reduce their stress is to DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM by:
 - a) getting started;
 - b) getting finished;
 - c) getting help;
 - d) getting over the things that are beyond their control.

Bottom Line: Most students are only vaguely aware of their own stress and don't know how to deal with it. They don't need you to fix things, they need you to be a coach to help them learn to be independent and take on the responsibility for themselves.

6. Help your child maintain a healthy life balance

Research says: Junior high can be stressful and teens often have trouble managing time.

Tips:

- Create a regular time, place, and supervision for school work.
- Make time for family, friends, and fun.

Bottom Line: All work and no play isn't a balanced lifestyle.

7. Keep in touch with the school

Research says: Parent involvement improves student achievement.

Tips:

- Check SchoolZone.epsb.ca.
- Come to conferences.
- Get to know your child's teachers.
- Keep the lines of communication open.
- Be a member of the Parent Council or attend Parent Council meetings.
- Be part of the parent fundraising society.
- Volunteer at school events.

Bottom Line: Our staff members have over 200 years of combined experience working with tens of thousands of junior high aged students. If there is a problem, often we can help.



Helping your child be successful: A Parents Guide

7 Things parents can do to help their junior high-aged children be successful

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Parents often ask us, "What can I do to help my child?"

There is "no one size fits all" answer, but a number of scientific studies and our own experience with adolescents have shown us that there are 7 key things that parents can do to help their junior high aged children.

1. Make sure your child gets enough sleep

Research says: Teens need at least 9½ hours of sleep. Lack of sleep leads to poor concentration, stress, poor relationships, and decreased learning.

Tips:

- Remove all electronics from your child's bedroom and stop screen time about an hour before bed. The light from screens stimulates the brain to stay awake.
- If your child is sleeping excessively on the weekend, he or she isn't getting enough sleep during the week.

Bottom Line: It is critical that your child maintains a reasonable bedtime *even on the weekends* or Monday will be a write-off.

2. Make sure your child eats breakfast

Research says: Eating within an hour of getting up sets up the brain for the day. Skipping breakfast leads to decreased concentration, sleepiness, poor impulse control, and crankiness.

Tips:

- A balanced breakfast is ideal, but an apple or a granola bar on the way out the door is better than nothing.
- If you are rushed, send something for your child to eat before class.
- Don't forget something for our mid-morning nutrition break.

Bottom Line: The brain uses 20% of the body's energy (kids can use up to twice that amount). Hungry kids have trouble focusing, learning, and behaving appropriately.

3. Encourage your child to exercise regularly

Research says: Exercise helps the brain function. After 30+ minutes of aerobic exercise, the brain actually starts to create new brain cells. Children who walk to school have an easier time focusing in class.

Tips:

- Clearly not every child can walk to school, but exercise can take a variety of forms.
- A walk around the block is a good start.

Bottom Line: The connection between body and brain is clear. The old adage "Healthy body, healthy mind" is true.

4. Stay connected to your child

Research says: Teens who are emotionally connected to a caring adult are less stressed and do better in all aspects of their lives.

Tips:

- Take an active interest in your child's life and monitor his or her progress.
- Teens often find face to face communication awkward, so try talking in the car while driving.
- Find things that you and your child can do together.
- Stay calm and do a lot of listening.
- Offer advice in short 30 second chunks and give your child time to absorb the message.
- Know where your child is and who he or she is with at all times.
- Encourage your child and say you love him or her every day, even if all you get is an eye roll.