

Health Care

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ROBERT H. CRANFIELD D.C.

Parents can help their high school-bound teens

Starting back to high school can be a time of excitement and anxiety for both students and parents—new friends, new teachers, and new challenges.

As an adult, parent, or caregiver you can make a positive difference by using the following tips to help you support teens as they go back to school.

Balancing homework, sports, extracurricular activities, and jobs

Parents can introduce teens to a variety of activities and people, and create a balance of commitments and interests. Be sure they have downtime.

- Teach time management skills.
- Work together to define responsibilities and consistent consequences.
- Limit part-time work to 15 hours a week.
- Monitor activities and well-being.

Making friends and keeping friends

Youth with strong interpersonal skills work well in groups, resolve interpersonal conflicts peacefully, and are comfortable sharing ideas and feelings. Share your personal struggles with relationship conflicts and be sensitive to teen frustrations.

- Treat your teens like you

treat your friends.

- Welcome their friends into your home.
- Address conflicts directly and negotiate solutions.
- Seek support from the parents of their friends.

Surviving in a larger school, getting lost, and competing for sports teams

Teens are particularly anxious about being embarrassed

- Encourage teens to ask for help.
- Stay in touch with the school.
- Recommend involvement in school social activities.

Dealing with bullying, teasing, intimidation, and violence

Friendships and good interpersonal skills are the best defence against intimidat-

firm, not coercive.

- Make sure they have a plan if anyone tries to hurt them.
- Work with the school.

Managing longer classes, exams, projects, and academic course choices

Teens who are committed to learning recognize the value of completing school.

Parents can consult with

ten to their assignments.

- Monitor their activities and school attendance.

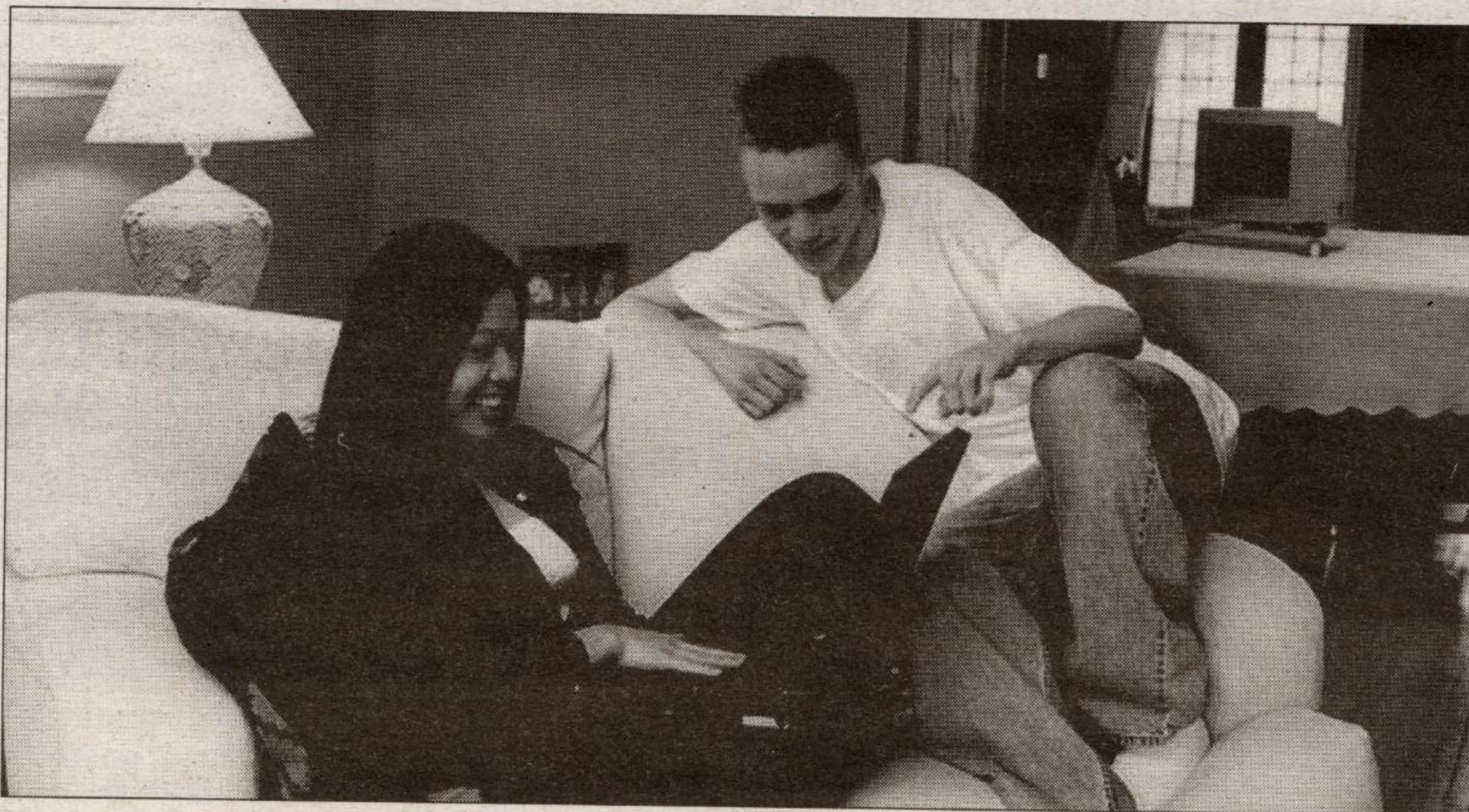
Keep talking with your teens
Parenting a teen can be tough as well as rewarding. Staying involved is the key to success and the easiest way to stay involved is to keep talking. Communicating effectively with your teen takes practice.

- Ask a lot of questions – avoid statements or lectures.
- Help them solve their own problems.
- Use music or TV to get them talking – “What do you think about that?”
- Give daily encouragement.

Back to school time is an opportunity to consider everything we do to keep teens happy, healthy, and safe. Contributing to the interests, skills, experiences and relationships of all teens will have a lasting positive effect on their lives.

For more information call the Halton Region Health Department at 905-825-6000, toll free: 1-888-866-4HALTON (1-888-442-5866), TTY 905-827-9833. Visit their Web site at www.region.halton.on.ca/health.

—Health Notes is prepared by staff of the Halton Region Health Department



and not fitting in. Parents can help plan for these changes and solve problems with teens.

- Include familiar routines and people in the transition to high school.

tion. Watch for signs of trouble, invite discussion, and problem solve together.

- Encourage supportive friendships.
- Use discipline that is

school staff and set time and space aside for homework.

- Expect them to do their best.
- Help set achievable goals.
- Offer to quiz them or lis-

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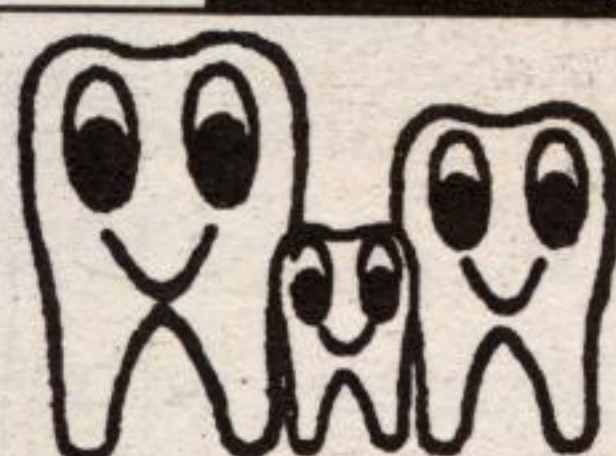
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