

Fathers, Monitor Your Teen and His Friends

In a significant study on adolescent development, researchers Schneider & Stevenson note that teenagers perceive their fathers more positively than what is commonly believed.

Though the father/child relationships went through periods of “some conflict and identity formation,” they were “not as turbulent as others have depicted.” For the most part, adolescents described their fathers as supportive, loving, and accepting of them.

Not surprisingly, an area of concern for the fathers was peer influence on their teens. The researchers discovered that students who have clear goals and ambitions for their future tend to have fathers who know their friends and have some influence regarding the friends with whom they associate.

Since friendships are so important to our teens, we fathers should consider how we can contribute to their wise choices in friends and appropriately monitor how their peer group influences them.

To Think About

Roger diligently monitored his son Ryan's educational and sports achievements, but failed to stay connected with Ryan's other activities. As a sophomore, Ryan became involved with a new group of friends, and though he continued to perform well in school and sports, Roger began to sense that something wasn't right.

One night during Ryan's senior year, Roger overheard his son's friends making jokes about stealing cars. He had no idea it would soon become a reality. When Ryan was picked up for car theft, Roger was devastated. At 18, his son was charged with a felony, and the presiding judge had a history of going by the

book.

At the hearing, Roger was surprised to see another peer group in attendance—his own. Several fathers came to silently support Roger, and have continued to do so throughout the process. It has made a significant difference for Roger.

During this time when our children's peers are a major concern, the positive influence of our own peers can be a major asset.

Action Points for Committed Fathers

- Play a memory game with your adolescent. See if you can name his three best friends in grade school and junior high. Then see if he can name three of your good friends.
- With a younger child, talk about how friends can be a benefit and what makes a good friend.
- Review with your wife the friends your child is choosing in school.
- Ask your children what new friends they have met since school began. Plan a time to host your child's friends soon and watch how they interact.

All Pro Dad is Family First's innovative and unique program for every father. Their aim is to interlock the hearts of the fathers with their children and, as a by-product, the hearts of the children with their dads. At , dads in any stage of fatherhood can find helpful resources to aid in their parenting. Resources include: daily emails, blogs, Top 10 Lists, articles, printable tools, videos and eBooks. From fathers can join the highly engaged All Pro Dad social media communities on **Facebook, Twitter, YouTube** and **Instagram**.