

WHAT TEENS NEED IN ORDER TO THRIVE

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BASIC NEEDS: (surviving)

Everyone has basic needs. These include the following: being safe, having an appropriate shelter (home), food and clothing. Children also need age-appropriate boundaries. Unfortunately, some parents think they are “doing all they can” when they provide for just the basic needs of their children.

Psychologist Abraham Maslow studied successful people and created a HIERARCHY-PYRAMID OF NEEDS for all humans. The basic needs were on the bottom rung, and Maslow argued that people who do not get their basic needs met are handicapped and unable to move higher and develop healthy self-esteem. (At the top of Maslow’s HIERARCHY-PYRAMID are those people who thrive personally and socially. He called these people “self-actualizers”).

So what are the “secondary” needs children have?

SECONDARY NEEDS: (thriving)

We now know that just supplying children the basic needs is not enough if we want them to really thrive! Our success at providing the secondary needs is crucial for our child’s successful development into adulthood. Below is a partial list of secondary needs:

1. Parents who have “free attention” to focus on their child and how to help him succeed. Time together is a key!!
2. Parents who will **ALWAYS** wear the imaginary baseball cap with the words “ I AM THE PRESIDENT OF MY CHILD’S FAN CLUB.”
3. Parents who can listen non-judgmentally, and learn about their child’s world.
4. Parent’s who respectfully help children make wise choices.
5. Parents who are actively involved AS THEIR CHILD’S ADVOCATE with the school system. This means regular communication with teachers, counselors and school administrators.
6. Parents who can set clear age-appropriate boundaries about family rules and roles and lovingly give appropriate and consistent consequences that help him learn from his choices.
7. Parents who model living life mindfully and joyfully.
8. Parents who can help their child develop appropriate habits and hobbies (like band, reading for fun, a judo-class, or after-school sports).
9. Parents who can help their child develop age-appropriate friendships. This often means taking their child places in the evenings and on weekends that encourage positive friendships.
10. Parents who sit down regularly with their child to discuss how life is going. The key is BEING INTERESTED, not solving problems.

11. Parents who read parenting books and take classes that help them become more effective parents.
12. Parents who plan regular family outings.
13. Parents who give their children age-appropriate weekly chores.
14. Parents who offer a safe, loving, and stimulating home environment: for example, homes where TV is off while people read, and homes that have regular family dinners together.
15. Parents who gently and clearly explain (and are willing to discuss) their opinions and their expectations of the child.
16. Parents who apologize sincerely when they make a mistake.
17. Parents who understand, and live by, the 'MASTERY MODEL' of life: that is, they encourage their child to set goals and improve, but they do not expect perfection from the child. These parents praise effort and improvement, rather than reaching the top.
18. Parents who are ASSET BUILDERS: for example, they put time and effort into helping their child connect with adult role-models.
19. Parents who MODEL A HEALTHY LIFE-STYLE, including the following:
 - a. *Eating nutritional foods,*
 - b. *Getting enough rest,*
 - c. *Getting regular exercise,*
 - d. *Practicing responsible money management,*
 - e. *Enjoying learning new things,*
 - f. *Having a good work ethic,*
 - g. *Having a network of supportive friends,*
 - h. *Being compassionate toward others,*
 - i. *Having an active spiritual practice,*
 - j. *Having the ability to resolve conflicts peacefully,*
 - k. *Having the ability to plan ahead, and*
 - l. *Living life joyously with an attitude of gratitude!*



The challenge is huge for parents who want to provide the best possible supportive environment for their child. Being a loving and effective parent may be the most difficult job you ever undertake. It is also the most important job you will ever have. Don't be discouraged. *Just do the best you can!*

