

ANDERSON HIGH SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



A Recognized School of Excellence

7560 Forest Road, Cincinnati, OH 45255

April, 2001

Parents and Peer Pressure

Nobody ever said that parenting was easy. It is a hard task to raise kids ... at 6 years old they have all the questions and at 18, many teens seem to have all the answers. One of the toughest issues to deal with as parents is peer pressure. It is an issue that parents have to recognize and work with ... there is no ignoring it.

By definition, peer pressure is when people your own age try to change the way you think and act.

During the teenage years it is a time when the peer group becomes very important. They see the peer group as a family and they look for groups to belong to. When they find a group, they bond to the group and they abide by the group rules because they want to be in the group. Interactions within the group are where peer pressure comes into play. The pressure can be obvious and direct or subtle and hidden.

Within the group, peers learn from each other. They spend hours talking with each other in two-way conversations. They don't judge each other; they test ideas out. They create a system where they are wanted and valued and when they are with their peers, they feel special.

As young people go through their teen years, some parents begin to see themselves as having less influence on their children than their peers do. Research actually shows that the average parent only spends 7 minutes per day in face to face, two way, conversation with his/her children. But given that statistic, the reality is that when we survey teenagers, they consider their parents the greatest influence on their lives.

There is no question in my mind that "parents are the best teachers." Parents can counteract negative peer pressure and here are some things you can do.

1. Know who your children are hanging out with. If they are hanging out with teens of bad character, you must do whatever it takes to end the relationship.
2. Make friends with your children's friends. Convert your basement into a local hangout.
3. Help engineer the peer group they belong to.
 - Get them into certain sport groups
 - Get them into certain music groups
 - Get them to church
 - Get them in the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, YMCA
4. Eat dinner with your children at least 4 nights per week. Open up a dialogue ... look for teachable moments ... talk about all of the issues. At the dinner table you can make a difference in the choices your kids are going to make.
5. Help children develop some alternative activities on the weekends.
6. Be a good role model. Your children watch everything you say and do.

Negative peer pressure is a tough issue to overcome but we can do it as parents. There are some definite things we can do to successfully raise teenagers. Call me at 232-2772 if you want to discuss more on this issue.

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Mike Hall".

Michael D. Hall, Principal

P
R
I
N
C
I
P
A
L
S
.
P
E
R
S
P
E
C
T
I
V
E