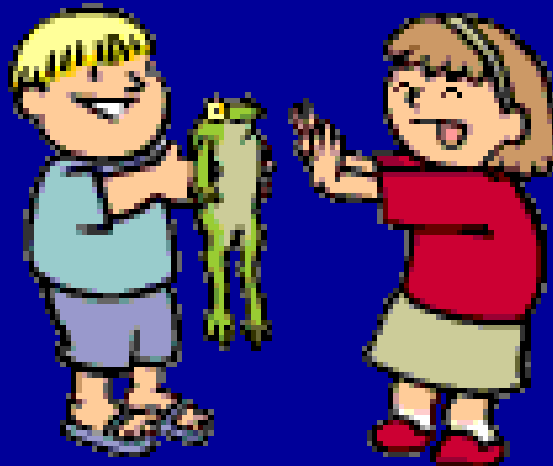


Learning How to Kiss A Frog



⑩ A Presentation Designed for
Parents and Families of Middle
School Students

Presentation Goals & Objectives

- ⑩ Help parents and/or families better understand their adolescent child
- ⑩ Familiarize parents and/or families to our middle school program
- ⑩ Provide parents and/or families with information and resources to better help them understand adolescence

Adolescence: When Did It Happen?

“It seems as though it happened overnight.”

- She used to tell me everything! Now she spends hours in her room on the telephone or online.
- My son used to love going places and doing things with me, and now all he wants is a ride and to be dropped off at a friend’s house.
- My daughter and her girlfriends spend hours “doing makeup” and trying on clothes. And now, my daughter can’t seem to go anywhere alone.... she and her friends seem to walk in packs.....

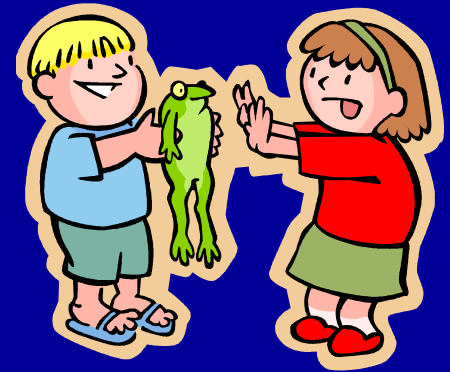
Do those concerns sound familiar?

Do you have concerns or other questions about your adolescent child?

Do you need answers?!



What's a Frog?



Frog: (n) Youngsters between the ages of eleven and fifteen

During these years, adolescents are:

- Going through an awkward period
- Behaving inconsistently
- Intensely curious
- Preoccupied with self
- Experiencing mood swings
- Needing to feel competent and autonomous

This is the result of critical physical, intellectual, social and emotional development, not of poor parenting or schooling!

So What Can You Do?



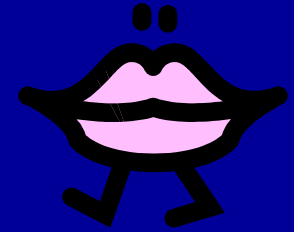
During this period, parents and/or families **MUST**:

- ⑩ understand the major changes occurring
- ⑩ help these youngsters develop to their fullest and brightest potential

This is **NOT** an easy time for your child, and it is crucial to your youngster's development that you...

LEARN HOW TO KISS A FROG!

Preparing for “Frogness”



- ⑩ No hugs and kisses in public! That could be the kiss of death for your frog!
- ⑩ Frogs like to feel as if they are in “control” of their parents when other frogs are around.
- ⑩ A frog’s lily pad, his/her bedroom, is very important and only other frogs are allowed to enter.
- ⑩ Frogs generally aren’t hiding anything; they just see you (parents/families) differently!
- ⑩ It is not cool to see parents/families as confidants, although they still need your approval!

Frogness...

- ⑩ Frogs gather in groups and walk in “herds”.
Rarely will you find a frog walking alone, unless it is absolutely necessary.
- ⑩ These youngsters will do almost anything to avoid embarrassment and ridicule
- ⑩ Adolescents need to be accepted by their peers
- ⑩ Frogs do not want to be different, but would rather be like their frog friends

Frogs...

- ⑩ Live in an imaginary world which revolves around them, they experience intense egocentrism.
- ⑩ Tend to spend a long time in the front of mirrors or any object that reflects their image.
- ⑩ Are influenced by other frogs more than any other person on a daily basis.
- ⑩ Care about the world and other issues, although they sometimes act as if the world is unimportant and dull.
- ⑩ Are intensely curious!

The Growing Pains of Frogs

- ⑩ May develop a hand-eye coordination problem.
- ⑩ Experience growth of arms and legs first, then hands and feet—making them look and feel clumsy!
- ⑩ Tailbones are *ossifying*—ouch that hurts and makes them squirm!
- ⑩ Drag their feet around because their feet “feel heavy”
- ⑩ May fall asleep at any time from inactivity
- ⑩ Have varying rates of maturity



How can we help our frogs?

- ⑩ Tell your frog you love them!
 - Those are powerful words
 - You may not receive a warm response
 - It will help them through this awkward stage!
- ⑩ Be a positive role model
 - Frogs often emulate the behavior of adults
 - Provide them with consistent positive examples
- ⑩ Show them that it's okay to be unique
- ⑩ Always be honest!
- ⑩ Provide genuine praise
- ⑩ Be a good listener
- ⑩ Continue to give them advice...even if they don't seem to be listening

How does our middle school program approach frogs?

- ⑩ Positive school climate
- ⑩ An integrated team approach
 - Teams are the “family” away from home!
 - Cooperative planning
- ⑩ Curriculum based on adolescent needs
 - Integrated/ interdisciplinary units
 - Cooperative learning
 - Varied instructional strategies
 - Variety of performance-based assessments
- ⑩ Flexible Environment
 - Block scheduling
 - Hands-on activities
 - Heterogenous Classroom grouping



How does our middle school program approach frogs? (continued)

- ⑩ Advisor/Advisee Program
- ⑩ Unified Development Programs
 - Art program
 - Chorus, band, music lessons
 - Intramurals/Sports teams and PE/Health program
 - Character-building Exploratory Sessions
 - Other after-school clubs and activities
- ⑩ Community Involvement
 - YMCA/Boys & Girls Club Activities



Online Resources for Parents

The following websites have excellent information and advice for parents and families of the middle school student.

New England League of Middle Schools – Parent Page

<http://www.nelms.org/parentroom.html>

SAMHSA's child, adolescent, and family resources

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/ChildrensCampaign/parents.asp>

MiddleWeb's Parent and Community resources

<http://www.middleweb.com/mw/resources/MWRpublic.html>

National Education Association's help for parents

<http://www.nea.org/parents/index.html>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services-Administration for Children and Families

<http://www.ncfy.com/Parents.htm>

Teen Health Issues

<http://www.albany.edu/~ph8543/pathfinder.html>



Literary Resources for Parents

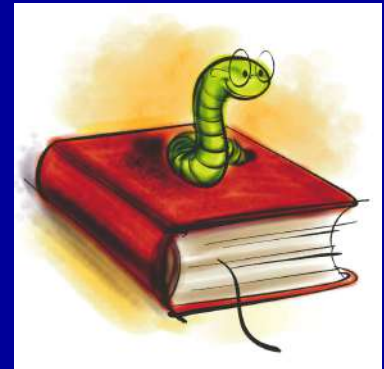
⑩ National Middle School Association's

- *This We Believe: Successful Schools for Young Adolescents*
- *Research and Resources in Support of This We Believe*

⑩ National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education's *School-Family Partnerships for Children's Success*

⑩ James Garvin's

Learning How to Kiss a Frog



Reference List

Garvin, J. (1994). *Learning how to kiss a frog*. Topsfield, MA: New England League of Middle Schools.

National Middle School Association, (2003). *This we believe: Successful schools for young adolescents*, Westerville, OH: Author.

Schurr, S.L., Thomason, J. & Thompson, M. (Lounsbury, J.H. eds), (1996). *Teaching at the middle level*. Lexington, MA: D. C. Heath and Company.

Thank You!

Now go and kiss your frog!
(in private, of course...)

