

How Parents Can Encourage Teens to Read

By Reading Is Fundamental (2008)

<http://www.adlit.org/article/23399>

1. **Set an example.** Let your kids see you reading for pleasure.
2. **Furnish your home with a variety of reading materials.** Leave books, magazines, and newspapers around. Check to see what disappears for a clue to what interests your teenager.
3. **Give teens an opportunity to choose their own books.** When you and your teen are out together, browse in a bookstore or library. Go your separate ways and make your own selections. A bookstore gift certificate is a nice way of saying, "You choose."
4. **Build on your teen's interests.** Look for books and articles that feature their favorite sports teams, rock stars, hobbies, or TV shows. Give a gift subscription to a special interest magazine.
5. **View pleasure reading as a value in itself.** Almost anything your youngsters read—including the Sunday comics—helps build reading skills.
6. **Read some books written for teens.** Young adult novels can give you valuable insights into the concerns and pressures felt by teenagers. You may find that these books provide a neutral ground on which to talk about sensitive subjects.
7. **Make reading aloud a natural part of family life.** Share an article you clipped from the paper, a poem, a letter, or a random page from an encyclopedia—without turning it into a lesson.
8. **Acknowledge your teen's mature interests.** Look for ways to acknowledge the emerging adult in your teens by suggesting some adult reading you think they can handle.
9. **Keep the big picture in mind.** For all sorts of reasons, some teenagers go through periods without showing much interest in reading. Don't panic! Time, and a few tips from this brochure, may help rekindle their interest.

More thoughts on encouraging teens to read...

- **Talk to your teen about what he/she is reading.** What is he/she enjoying about the book? What is puzzling about it? What does it make him/her think about?
- **Give your teen many opportunities to choose books and other reading material that they like.** Remember that teens like to read about topics and ideas that are important to them. Look for ways to help them discover interesting
- **Think about what gives you pleasure as a reader.** When you have a book you love, talk about it with your teen. What do you love about it? What does it make you think about?
- **Read something together with your teen.** Read, think and talk together about books, magazines or other reading material that you both enjoy.

Helping Teens Find Something to Read

Choose books that preteens and teens like:

- Preteens and teens are increasingly interested in local, national, and international current events. Read editorials and articles from the newspaper and news magazines.
- Preteens and teens question authority. Read classic and modern novels that deal with 'big' issues such as when the needs of a community are more important than those of individuals.
- Preteens and teens are striving for independence, yet still want to be connected to their families. Read your favorite books and explain why they are important to you and read books that let you share laughter, a good mystery, an action-packed adventure, a science fiction journey.
- Preteens and teens are gradually learning to think abstractly and understand the reasons behind views that differ from their own. Read books that challenge them to think 'outside of the box' and see the world beyond their daily experiences.
- Preteens and teens are thinking about what they will do in their lives—college, careers, and more. Read books that introduce a wide range of opportunities and experiences.

Some Cool Websites for Finding Books

YALSA: Young Adult Library Services Association

<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/yalsa/booklistsawards/booklistsbook.cfm>

Bookspot: Young Adult Books

<http://www.bookspot.com/youngadultfeature.htm>

International Reading Association – Choices Booklists: Young Adults' Choices

http://www.reading.org/resources/tools/choices_young_adults.html

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Staff Suggestions

<http://www.carnegielibrary.org/teens/read/booklists/>

Reading Rants! Out of the Ordinary Teen Booklists! (includes interactive blog where teens can respond to reviews and/or write their own)

<http://www.readingrants.org/>

Looking for Something to Read?

<http://www.taylor.lib.oh.us/teen/reading.html>

Lazy Readers' Book Club: Welcome to the Lazy Readers' Book Club, your reading time manager!

<http://www.lazyreaders.com/>

Denver Public Library

<http://teens.denverlibrary.org/find/genre/awards.html>

Bridge the Communication Logjam: The best way to stay close to a budding teenager? Try books.

<http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=1545>