Teen Goal 2: Parents are “Crazy”

Often times, parents worry or are concerned about you. The point of this goal is to learn to appreciate and understand why parents behave as they do.

This goal may be difficult for teens who may not have a good relationship with their parents, or whose parents may not really worry or be concerned about their teen.

I: Eye-Catcher: Skit

Please use one of the following activities at the beginning of your session as an eye-catcher. The actual scripts for each skit are located in Appendix 2A.

1. Worried Parents- Sean has not been acting like himself lately and his grades are slipping. Sean’s parent is concerned about him and wants to know what is going on so that s/he can help him. Sean just wants to be left alone.

2. Staying Out Past Curfew- Maria comes home an hour late and finds her parents waiting up. She blows them off, and gets grounded. Parents do the same to Maria the next weekend to teach her a lesson.

3. The Stay Connected: Parent Don’ts - Parent Don’ts is a quick video clip that displays parents telling their teens “don’t” do negative behaviors, but ends with positive “don’ts” (e.g., don’t forget I love you). Process questions can be found in Appendix 2A.
II: Mini-lecture

(PowerPoint slides can be found on the CD; see speaker notes in the slide show for additional information.)

Note.

For Parents Worry About You (Slide 2)
- Have the group generate a list of possible behaviors or activities in which they participate that would probably worry their parents. Have a teen write the possible reasons for parental worries up on a large post it note.

For Parents Worry About You (Slide 3)
- Continue to have the group generate a list of reasons why their parents may worry about them. Put the list on a separate post-it note. Have a different volunteer write this time.

For Parents Worry About You (Slide 4)
- Have another teen volunteer put this list of behaviors on a large post-it note as others call out the possible behaviors.

For Parents Worry About You (Slide 5)
- Have the teens answer each of the questions on this slide and have them provide answers in addition to the example you have provided.
- Have teens share some of what they’ve learned from talking with their parents about their parents’ experiences when they were teens.

III: In-session Activities:

A. Cartoon: Students should create a cartoon about a time their parents were worried about them. The cartoon should include both the parent(s) and the student, and what is going on in each of their heads. (See Appendix 2B for an example)
   - Materials Needed: Paper, markers or pencils
   - Process Questions:
     - Have the teens share what their cartoon is and what they were thinking when they drew it.
     - What are your parents worried about? Why?
     - Do they have reason to be concerned? Why or why not?

B. Brainstorming: Teens generated lists during the mini-lecture regarding when parents worried, why they worry, the kinds of behaviors parents engage in when they are worried and why this is so. With each new list, a

* See supporting research topic: The Critical Role of Parental Warmth and Support
new teen volunteer writes the responses on the post-it notes so there is more teen participation.

- **Materials needed:** Large post-it notes for each list, markers
- **Process Questions**
  - We generated a list of behaviors that your parents may worry about you if you participated in, and we generated a list of why they would worry and ways in which they show they are worried.
  - Do any of your parents behave in these ways? How does that make your feel?
  - Do you think that it’s important that your parents worry about you? Why?
  - How do you feel now about your parents worrying about you after discussing the possible reasons why they may worry about you?

- **C. Creative Corner:** Create a poem or a rap that illustrates how your parents show they care for you and love you, and why they might be worried or concerned about you. Be creative! Once completed, share with the group and explain what your poem or rap means.
  - **Materials needed:** Paper, pencils
  - **Process Questions**
    - After hearing all of the poems/raps, what are the different ways in which parents show they love you?
    - What are the different ways they show they are concerned about you?
    - What are the different reasons why they are concerned about you? What have you learned?
    - What do you now understand about parental concern?
    - Do you understand why they love you and are concerned at times? Why or why not?

- **D. Parent Don’ts:** Stay connected videos. If you did not use this video clip during the beginning of the session, you may use it now.
  - **Process Questions**
    - Why do you think that statements like “don’t forget I love you” were included in this video clip?
    - Why is it important? Why do you think that parents tell us not to do some things? Why is that also important?

- **E. Find a clip:** Use a clip from a movie or TV show that pertains to parents being worried about their teen in which the parents are discussing this among themselves and then with the teen. The reason parents are worried can vary from not so serious to very serious.
  - **Process Questions:** After the video, it will be important to discuss with the teens why the parents are worried and whether the parents should be worried. Why or why not?
IV: Wrap-Up - see last slide of PowerPoint.
  o Have the teens tell you what they have learned from today’s session and how they feel they can apply their new knowledge at home.
  o Provide handouts. Tell them how to use them at home and when to take a look at them.

V: Handouts
  • Stay-Connected Tip Card (see Appendix 2C).

VI: Out-of-session Activities:

The following activity is designed to help you begin to understand when your parents are worried or concerned about you and provide a way in which your parents can tell you about their concern. However, this can also be used as a way to communicate when they are feeling supportive of you and love you. This is also a way in which you can tell your parents about when you are feeling concerned, worried, supportive or love for your parents. This activity is designed to spark open communication and understanding between parents and teens.

Family Mailbox - Be creative and share!!! (See Stay-Connected Activity # AS13)
  • Remember that it may take some time for parents and teens to begin opening up if they are not used to talking and sharing in this manner, but hopefully, in the long run both you and your parents won’t need the mailbox to talk. Instead, you should be able to verbally express your feelings when such feelings arise.
  • Finally, it is important to remember that this activity is designed so that you can begin to understand when and why your parents are worried about you.

Creative Corner -
  • Share your poem or rap from today’s session with your parent(s).
  • Explain to your parent(s) what it means to you and discuss it.

VII. Evaluation (see Appendix 2D)
* Please remember to have participants complete the evaluation form found at the end of this goal. Feel free to change activities as needed before duplicating.
Appendix 2A: Eye-Catchers

1. **Slipping Grades**

Parent: Sean, I have been so worried about you lately. Your grades are slipping and I haven’t seen you working on your homework lately. What is going on?

Sean: Nothing is wrong. I’m fine.”

Parent: I know something is going on. Is there something at school that has been bothering you? Does it have something to do with your friends? Please tell me, I am so worried that if you keep going down this path, you won’t be able to graduate this year.

Sean: I already told you. Nothing is wrong. Would you just leave me alone!

**Process Questions:** Why do you think Sean’s mom/dad is worried about him? Do you think something could be wrong? What? Should Sean’s mom/dad be worried? What can Sean’s mom/dad do to help Sean? Is there a way that Sean could reach out for help?

2. **Stay Out Pass Curfew**

Setting: Maria walks in an hour past curfew to find her parent’s waiting up for her.

Parents: Where have you been? You are an hour past curfew. We have been worried that something happened to you.

Maria: I’m only an hour later. What’s the big deal?

Parents: We expect you to be home on time. It is for your own safety. We love you and worry about you. Do you have any idea what you have put us through the past hour?


Parents: You obviously don’t care that you broke curfew and worried us to death. You’re grounded for the next 2 weeks.

*Next weekend*
Parents: We are going to dinner and a movie. The movie starts at 9 pm, so we should be home by 11 pm. You take good care of your little sister and we’ll have our cell phone on if you need us.

Maria: Fine.
[Still irritated that she is grounded and has to baby-sit]

Narrator: 11:30 pm comes around and her parents are still not home. Maria calls her parents’ cell phone, but no answer. Maria starts pacing around. 12 pm comes around and her parents are still not home. Maria calls again, but there is still no answer. 12:30 pm and parents walk in. She is frantic.

Maria: You said you would be home at 11pm. Where have you been?

Parents: We decided to go to coffee after the movie. What’s the big deal?

Maria: I was worried because you were so late and never picked up your phone. I left two messages. (expressing understanding) Oh, I can’t believe it... I sound just like you did last weekend when I came home late.

Process Questions:
- What do you think Maria learned in this role-play?
- Do you think the parents returned home late to help Maria learn this important lesson?
- Could they have taught Maria this lesson another way? Would it have worked?
- Do you think Maria will come home on time next time? Why or why not?

3. Parent Don’ts: Stay connected videos

- Process Questions: Reactions. Why do you think that statements like “don’t forget I love you” were included in this video clip? Why is it important? Why do you think that parents tell us not to do some things? Why is that also important?
- Additional Process Questions: Are these the issues your parents are concerned about? Are there other issues, not discussed in the video, about which you and your parents don’t see eye to eye? Why do you think your parents feel so strongly about these issues? In what ways do your parents show you they are concerned about your well-being? What would you like your parents to do differently? What could you do differently?
Appendix 2B: Example Cartoon
Appendix 2C
Stay Connected Tip card for goal 2
(Duplicate as many as needed on card stock paper)

Parents are “Crazy”

- Often times, parents are worried or concerned about you.
- Parents worry about you for many reasons: they love you, they care for you, they want to see you make good decisions, they want you to do well in life, and they want you to be safe!
- When parents worry about you, they may give you advice, they may try to make a decision for you, or they may ask you a number of questions.
- Listen to your parent’s advice; they have already been there.
Appendix 2D

**Goal 2: Parents are “Crazy”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County________________</th>
<th>Name of Facilitator________________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School________________</td>
<td>Grade in school___________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circle one: male female</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity: Black/African American White/Caucasian Hispanic/Latino Native American Asian American Other________________________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Please circle the number that indicates how much you enjoyed the activities.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not at All</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>A lot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I enjoyed the Cartoon activity.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I enjoyed the Brainstorming activity.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I enjoyed creating the rap/poem.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Please circle the number that indicates what you knew before and after participating in this session.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before the Session</th>
<th>After the Session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not At All</td>
<td>A little</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand why my parents worry about me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the types of behaviors my parents engage in when they are worried about me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand what types of behaviors I engage in that make my parents worried about me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand why my parents give me advice.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand that my decisions influence my parents too.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>