

Help Your Child Balance School and Extracurricular Activities

After school activities can help students by:

- Giving students a chance to have fun, earn recognition and build self-esteem
- Developing physical, social and intellectual abilities
- Rounding out their education
- Helping students be admitted to college. Many schools look at activities, as well as grades, in making decisions about which students to admit.
- Helping prevent students from dropping out

Schoolwork Comes First!

School is your child's job. Even if you believe he/she is talented enough to be a world-class skater, school must come first. When your child no longer has time for homework, or is so tired he/she can't finish her homework without crying, he/she is under too much stress. It's time that you cut back on the activities so he/she can meet his/her primary responsibility—going to school.

Is My Child Too Involved?

If your child is showing any of these warning signs, it's time to cut back. Talk about what activities are most important. Tell your child that if they can't make decisions about which activities to cut out, you will. Watch for these warning signs:

1. Your child's grades drop.
2. Your child is tired all of the time.
3. Your child complains that they never have time to see their friends.
4. Your child is involved in two or more after-school activities on a given day of the week. On days loaded with activities, your child may run out of time or energy for homework. That's when the balance between school and activities can be upset.
5. Your child can not meet the basic obligations of the activity. For example, if your son is taking music lessons and he does not have time to practice his instrument every day.

Make Sure Your Child Gets Enough Sleep

A growing number of students—especially teens—suffer from sleep deprivation. That leads to poor concentration in school and an increase in many illnesses. What can you do to help your teen avoid sleep deprivation?

- Develop a regular schedule. A child who goes to bed at 1:30 a.m. one night and 9:30 p.m. the next is likely to have more sleep problems than the one who sets a more consistent bedtime. If possible, keep your weekend schedule similar to the schedule during the week.
- Limit drinks with caffeine—especially at night.
- Discourage exercise at night because exercise stimulates the body rather than relaxing it.