



TEENTALK

TIME TO MAKE GOOD CHOICES.

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Fitting in at School

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Fitting in at school can be hard, especially if you are transitioning from elementary to middle school or from middle to high school. It also can be difficult if you are a new student. There are times when everyone feels like they don't fit in. It's important to remember that you do not have to fit in with everyone. Try and find one group that shares your interests and values. Learning about yourself and your values is an important part in making new friends and fitting in.

Here are some tips for fitting in at school:

- Smile at people when you walk by. People are more likely to want to get to know someone who seems friendly.
- Try and initiate conversations. Sometimes just saying "hi" is enough to get a conversation going. Ask others questions about themselves; most people enjoy talking about themselves.
- Don't start talking with new friends by gossiping about old friends. That is a good way to make enemies. It's all about respect, trust and loyalty when it comes to making and

keeping friends. Just remember, treat others as you want to be treated.

- Try sitting with different groups during lunch or try joining a club or sports team.
- Try to find a group that you feel comfortable with that does not pressure you to do things that aren't safe. Just remember what your values are and stay true to them. See where you feel most comfortable, and then you can start to invite a few friends to hang out together.
- Start out slowly. For example, you do not want to jump into having a sleepover before you get to know your new friends.
- Don't be afraid to ask your parents for advice; they might have gone through a similar situation when they were young.

Here are some other do's and don'ts:

- Do join a new club or sports group
- Do be open minded when it comes to meeting new friends
- Don't pick a new group every week.
- Don't feel bad if you don't make new friends right away, it takes time!

You Asked For It – Answers from the Teen Talk website

The following are questions from Palmetto Health's Teen Talk website. If you have a question, take a look at our "You Asked For It" page ... you might find the answer there. If you don't, feel free to ask your own. It's quick, easy and free! Answers to questions will be posted in the "You Asked for It" section within 48 hours of receiving the question. Just go to palmettohealth.org/teentalk.

Question: I have a nine-year-old brother who is always bothering me. I try hard to ignore it, but he never stops! Whenever I tell my mom or dad they just say to ignore him. But he won't stop. Even if I ask him nicely. When I get mad I yell at him and then I'm the one who gets into trouble for yelling. Is this normal? I really hate being yelled at every day because my brother won't leave me alone when I want to do my homework. It's unfair.

Answer: We know it's frustrating, but it's completely normal. You're doing the right thing by telling your parents and asking your brother to stop, but, unfortunately, you aren't getting the support you need. Is there a friend's house you can go to where you can work on your homework, or maybe a place in the house where your brother won't bother you? You might even want to try giving him some attention (I know!) by playing one of his favorite games for 30 minutes. It may be that he wants some time with you. Just make it clear that after you are done, you need your quiet time to do work. If that doesn't work, sit your parents down and have a serious conversation with them about how he is interrupting your homework time.

Question: How do you know when it is the right time to have sex?

Answer: Ideally, the right time to have sex is when you are married and in a committed monogamous relationship. Not everyone chooses to wait until then, but the sooner people start having sex the more at risk they are for disease and unintended pregnancy. For example, young teen girls are more at risk for getting a sexually transmitted disease because their reproductive organs and tissue on the cervix aren't fully developed. Also, the younger people are when they start having sex, the more sexual partners they will have, which means more chance of contracting a STD or becoming pregnant. Deciding when to have sex is a big decision and not one to be taken lightly. We suggest talking to a trusted adult about this issue and weighing the pros and cons. Chances are if you aren't able to do that, then maybe you aren't ready to have sex.

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