



## Ten Important Things To Teach Your Teen

By Dr. Linda Hancock

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

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The word graduation is usually defined as the receiving or conferring of an academic degree or diploma. Most of us, however, use the term to refer to times in life when we have completed something of which we can be proud.

Often a child graduates, leaves home and continues life in another location. As a parent, there are things that you can teach them before that day comes to help them throughout the rest of their lives. Be sure they know how to:

1. Greet people respectfully - I have never heard anyone complain when they are greeted by someone who stands up, gives a firm handshake, looks the person in the eye and says "I'm pleased to meet (see) you".
2. Handle their finances wisely - Money is more than just having a debit card and crossing fingers when approaching an ATM. It means paying bills on time, spending less than earned, balancing the cheque book, understanding investing principles and having a plan for the future. Go with your child to a financial institution and help him/her to ask good questions.
3. Take care of their health - Besides eating a nutritious diet and exercising, it is important to ensure that medical and dental appointments scheduled and kept. Your child also needs to consider the fact that whatever goes into the body determines the performance that can be accomplished. Put sugar in the gas tank of their vehicle and they will have problems. Put drugs and alcohol in their system and they will have problems!
4. Give a day's work for a day's pay - Employers trust the individuals who they hire and are willing to share some of the profits with them - but only if they contribute to the business through their labour.
5. Become a life-long learner - Every day offers many opportunities to gain knowledge but this requires curiosity and follow-through. Teach your child to be interested in the world and other people so that they can grow.
6. Practice assertiveness - When you know what you need and know how to ask for it in a healthy way then you will not be bullied or victimized.
7. Focus on the positive - When Henry Ford's factory was burning down he enthusiastically told a bystander to quickly get his wife because she was never going to have a chance to see a fire that big again! It's all about perspective!
8. Embrace Gratitude - We live in a world of blessings but not everyone recognizes this! Make a daily habit of thinking about all the things that make life easier.
9. Give back - There are so many organizations and individuals who need help. Identify skills and strengths that can be invested into worthy projects so that others can benefit.
10. Seek help - Everyone has times when they can benefit from the expertise of a professional. Often a few words of wisdom can save a great deal of money and pain. Do not hesitate to consult with a financial expert, physician, psychologist or religious leader when you need support.

These are gems that they will treasure forever!