

# WHAT YOU DO AT HOME MAKES A DIFFERENCE

## BEYOND THE BLUEPRINT:

Literacy in Grades 4-12 and Across the Content Areas



Connecticut State Department of Education 2007

## BEYOND THE BLUEPRINT:

### Literacy in Grades 4-12 and Across the Content Areas

The Connecticut State Department of Education's *Beyond the Blueprint: Literacy in Grades 4-12 and Across the Content Areas*, an extension of Connecticut's *K-3 Blueprint for Reading Achievement*, supports educators by providing systematic, ongoing literacy programming for students in grades 4-12. It provides a broader, deeper, well-informed research-based orientation required to help older students develop into highly literate citizens. For a copy, visit the state website at [www.sde.ct.gov](http://www.sde.ct.gov).

## LITERACY SUPPORT RESOURCES

Connecticut State Department of Education - [www.sde.ct.gov](http://www.sde.ct.gov)

Connecticut State Library - [www.cslib.org](http://www.cslib.org)

International Reading Association - [www.reading.org/resources/tools/parent.html](http://www.reading.org/resources/tools/parent.html)

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition -  
<http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/resabout/parents/>

National Education Association - [www.nea.org/readacross/parents.html](http://www.nea.org/readacross/parents.html)

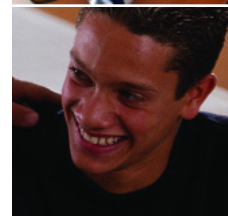
The National Center for Family Literacy - [www.familylit.org](http://www.familylit.org)

Reading is Fundamental - <http://www.rif.org/parents/>

U.S. Department of Education -

<http://www.ed.gov/parents/read/resources/edpicks.jhtml>

- Check out your local library for all types of reading materials and good advice on selections.
- Call the Connecticut Parent Information and Resource Center (CT PIRC) at 1.800.842.8678.



Empowering Your  
Preteen and Teen  
for Success



# LITERACY FOR LIFE!

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Connecticut Family  
Learning Initiative

A PROJECT OF THE STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



# ENCOURAGE THE ENJOYMENT OF READING

Though it may seem like teens do not want their parents' advice, research shows they really do.



It is around fourth grade when reading becomes difficult for some students. This is the time when children are no longer "learning to read" but "reading to learn." Books at this level have fewer pictures and are longer and more challenging. Reading for and learning about information becomes critical, and materials are presented in written, spoken, and visual forms. Students who become frustrated risk falling behind. If they do not catch up, many of these young people will leave school. Poor literacy is the number one risk indicator for dropping out.

Over time, active family support often declines as parents struggle with how to remain involved as their children gain more independence. The fact is, students are more successful when their families stay engaged in their learning through upper elementary, middle, and high school.

Literacy is the ability to use reading and writing, as well as listening, speaking, viewing, and presenting, to communicate and learn new ideas. There are many simple and fun ways families can support out-of-school literacy and learning.

**Literacy is the bridge to success and families help build it!**



Literacy and learning make families strong.

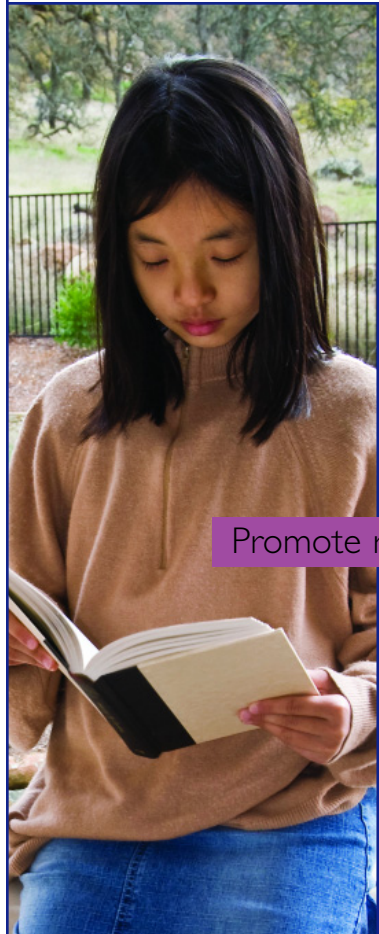
# LITERACY IS THE BRIDGE TO SUCCESS





## READING & WRITING

- \* Read daily! Set aside 30 minutes each day for reading before turning on electronic games or television.
- \* Encourage your teen to read for pleasure by building on his/her interests.
- \* Give books as presents, so books become special and pleasurable.
- \* Suggest your teen read different types of fiction, such as plays and poetry. Broaden your range of novels to include thrillers, mysteries, romance, humor, and science fiction.



Promote reading about your family's culture and heritage.

- \* Encourage your teen to read for information. Reading editorials, autobiographies, reviews, and manuals will give your teen practice with nonfiction.
- \* Ask your teen to read aloud with the appropriate rate and expression to younger siblings.
- \* Help your teen learn to question what is read and heard. Not everything is true or accurate. Having conversations about sources of information will help your teen understand an author's bias and if a source is reliable.
- \* Show your teen you never stop learning and building vocabulary. Find new words in reading. Use new words in writing.
- \* Help your teen discover his/her creativity. Keeping a journal, writing stories, or poetry are good ways for teens to deal with the challenges of adolescence.
- \* Encourage seeking different points of view and multiple sources of information to support writing.
- \* Help your teen share writing. Teens can send an editorial to the newspaper, enter a writing contest, or post a book review on-line.
- \* Make writing a part of your family's everyday life. Tasks as simple as making shopping lists, writing thank-you notes, or posting messages on a blog reinforce literacy skills.

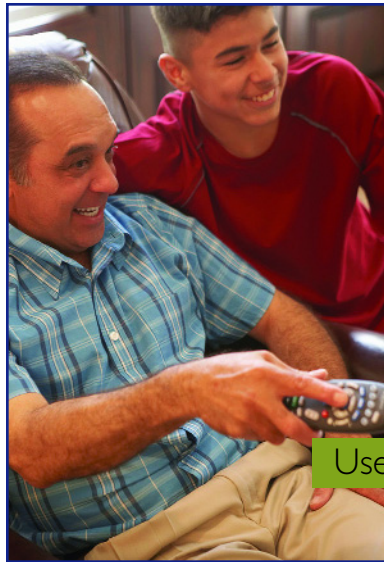
# YOU ARE YOUR TEEN'S LITERACY ROLE MODEL

Make sure your teen has a library card and uses it.

Let your teen see you read and write.







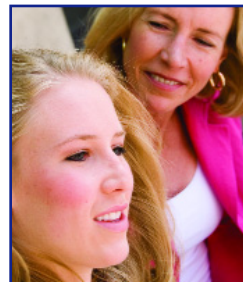
## LISTENING & SPEAKING

- \* Talk to your teen! Be a good listener when your teen talks to you.
- \* Listen to books on tape or compact disc with your teen. Libraries offer many different audio books from which to choose.
- \* Put learning to use. Ask your teen what he/she thinks about a current event. Have him/her support positions with facts.

Use television as a conversation starter.

- \* Share your family history stories and encourage your teen to interview other family members about their lives.

- \* Let your teen teach you something.
- \* Watch and discuss television shows, movies, and videos with your adolescent. Check your teen's understanding and encourage him/her to ask questions and relate the show to real-life experiences. Be your own movie critic and develop a family rating system.
- \* Ask your teen to teach you facts or ideas from their homework or act out a character from their reading. When teens bring learning to life it helps them remember the information.
- \* Allow your teen to make speeches, while you listen for supporting evidence and persuasion.
- \* Support your teen's use of technology for presentations. Most public libraries offer free computer access.



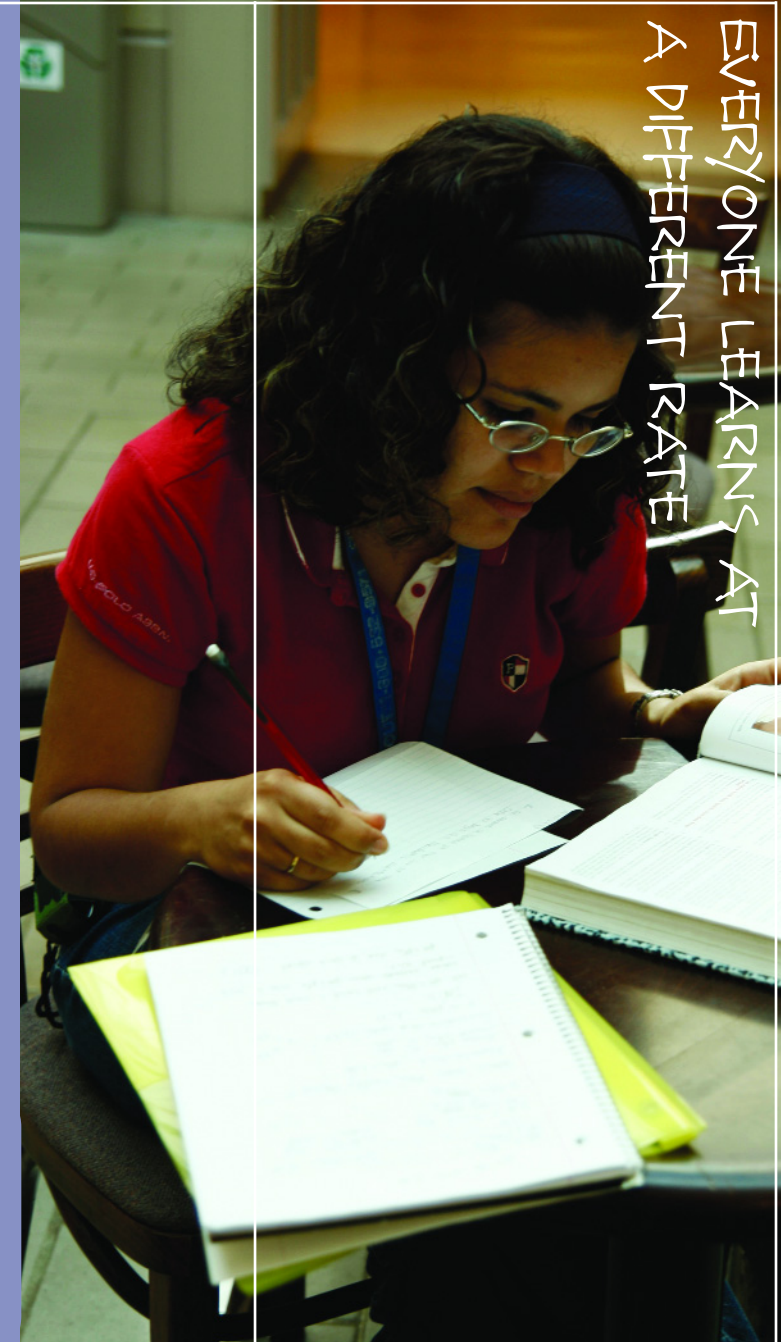
Listen carefully and respond respectfully to each other.

## SPECIAL TIPS

What can you do if your teen is struggling with reading and writing?

- \* Do not worry. Everyone learns at different rates; it is never too late to gain necessary communication skills.
- \* Talk with your teen's teachers and share your concerns. Ask if the same struggles are taking place in school. Ask what the teachers are doing to support your teen. Ask what you can do at home.
- \* Ask all teachers what types of literacy activities are taking place connected to the subject matter. Students should be reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and presenting in every class.
- \* Take advantage of after-school and summer-school tutoring opportunities.
- \* Show your teen you value education. Check to see your teen gets to school on time, completes homework, and is signed up for classes required for college.
- \* Focus on the positive. Tell your teen he/she has done a good job. Write a note to show you care.

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EVERYONE LEARNS AT A DIFFERENT RATE