



Tips for Teens

Keeping Challenge Day Alive at Your School

- ❖ **Be the change you want to see.**

Too many teens, and adults for that matter, complain about what others are doing instead of looking at themselves. We are powerless over what other people do, but we have total control over ourselves. Every one of us can make a difference.
- ❖ **Serve others.**

Serving others not only makes a difference in their lives, it makes us feel proud. It is a scientific fact that service to others makes us both healthier and happier. Look for and create opportunities to serve. Practice sharing random acts of kindness with people around you.
- ❖ **Teach love and respect.**

Share what you learned at Challenge Day as often as you can. Not only will it help spread the messages of love and respect, it will also be a great reminder for you.
- ❖ **Be a positive leader!**

Have fun! Smile and celebrate often. Enjoy yourself without hurting others. Appreciate your friends, family and yourself. Be gentle with yourself and with others. Remember we all know what it's like to be hurt and teased. Make people want to act like you act and feel like you feel.
- ❖ **Remember you are a role model to others.**

You decide what kind! Your friends, little brothers and sisters, and everyone else around you learn more from what you do than from anything you say. Don't do anything you wouldn't want your little brother or sister to do. Your role modeling is your best teaching tool.
- ❖ **Empty your emotional balloon on a regular basis.**

Find safe places to share what's in your heart. Find adults and friends who you trust who will listen to you. Share all the feelings in your balloon so you don't have to numb them out and they won't leak out on the people who you love. Remember to dance, cry, sing, laugh, play and find other safe and healthy ways to fully express yourself.
- ❖ **Teach the adults in your life.**

Share what you learned at Challenge Day with every adult who will listen. Remember adults have a lot of power to support you in making the world a better place. Encourage them to get involved. Seeing an inspired teen can change an adult's life forever.
- ❖ **Compliment and thank others.**

Let the people you love know that you love them. Remember to use put-ups, not put-downs. Everyone loves to be appreciated. Look for the good in others. If you think something nice, say it! Remember if you are not a part of the solution, you are part of the problem. A kind word from you may even save someone's life some day. Give lots of hugs!
- ❖ **Remember you are 100% responsible for your own choices.**

Avoid blaming others for your mistakes. When you are wrong or you hurt someone, say you're sorry. It takes a bigger person to admit they were wrong than it does to blame our behavior on others. Anger and resentments hurt all of us. Saying sorry allows for healing to take place both with the other person and in our own hearts.

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❖ **Interrupt put-downs, teasing and all other forms of violence.**

Be a stand for others and they can be a stand for you. We all know what it feels like to be hurt. None of us likes it so why not make it stop? Stand by what you believe is right. Even if people seem to turn against you at the time, they will admire and respect you in the long run if you stay true to yourself and your values. Friends who won't respect you for who you are and what you believe are not real friends. Remember not to laugh at or tell sexist, racist, homophobic or any other hurtful jokes. They only add to the lies we learn about others and separate us from potential friends. Remember everyone deserves equal respect.

❖ **Follow your heart.**

We all have dreams. Find yours and only hang out with people who will support and celebrate them. Never settle for anything less. We all have special gifts and talents. Do whatever makes your heart sing!

❖ **Take care of your environment.**

At school, at home and in the community, the way you treat yourself and the way you treat the world is a reflection of the way you feel inside. Remember to do your part and a little bit more. We are all connected. Exercise regularly, empty your emotional balloon and avoid alcohol, drugs, tobacco and other mood-altering or self-destructive behaviors. Remember that every choice we make in some way affects everyone around us.

❖ **Make positive art.**

Express your thoughts, beliefs and emotions through poetry, music and art whenever possible. Art is not only a great way to express yourself but it is also a great way to bring joy and to share your gifts with others. Make posters, buttons, paintings, songs and poems that help bring the lessons of Challenge Day to others.

❖ **Become a Mentor.**

Share your lessons, love and support with younger peers. Make a difference in the lives of others.

Blog your 'Acts of Change' online.

Share your accomplishments with others. Celebrate accomplishments! Share service ideas. Create new possibilities. Give and get support. Connect with teens and adults all over the country who share your vision for the world.

❖ **Meet a potential new friend every day.**

Just say hello to everyone you see. Share a smile with someone who seems down. Offer your support to a stranger. Remember that a kind word or compliment can be the first step in creating a lifelong friendship.

❖ **Tell the truth.**

Trust works both ways. The only way you can ever truly trust another person is to be trustworthy yourself.

❖ **Just listen!**

The gift of listening is the best gift you can ever give another person. Avoid giving advice unless the person asks for it. You don't have to fix a person or change them. All you have to do is care enough to listen.

❖ **Enjoy learning.**

Ask questions. Find out why things are the way they are. Be a leader. Think for yourself. Form your own opinions. Express your beliefs and stand by them even when your friends pressure you to go along with the group.

❖ **Welcome and include others.**

We all know what it feels like to be new to a group, school or community. Look for people who are being left out and find ways to love them.