



EAST of the RIVER

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KIDSFAMILY

ADVICE COLUMN

IF YOU DON'T KNOW ... ASK!

The Youth Leadership Task Force of DC Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy invites you to send in your questions for its monthly Adults Only advice column. Please send your questions to jfourth@teenpregnancydc.org. In the subject line, please put "Advice Column."

Q: I AM A 45-YEAR-OLD FATHER of two sons who just moved to the District and was considering the putting my children in public schools rather than private schools. Are public schools safe?

A: For the most part, schools are safe. We have metal detectors and scanners. Sometimes, the police from the district in which the school is located will do random body searches, and sometimes the security guards will do random locker searches. But someone could very well bring a weapon to school on the days that body and locker searches are not done. Also, we are not allowed to bring anything inside the school building that could be a potential weapon such as mirrors, plastic cutlery and glass bottles, even if the bottles are unopened and for example, have orange juice in them.

Q: I AM A 50-YEAR-OLD GRANDMOTHER who is caring for my granddaughter. My question is this: How much are young people actually influenced by their friends?

A: Friends influence each other maybe 40 percent of the time. Because everyone wants to belong and to be accepted, you may go along with your friends and do whatever they want you do. Sometimes teens do think about what their friends are asking them to do or say before they act. Most of the time, you cannot get more than one or two people to do something such as skip school, drink or smoke. Believe it or not, we really care what our parents and grandparents think, even more than what our friends think.

If you know a teen who would benefit from the Youth Leadership Task Force experience, please go to www.teenpregnancydc.org and download an application.

