

# TEENAGERS AND SPRING FEVER

*Raising the Odds for Responsible Behavior*

© 2002 By Dr. Charles Fay

Spring fever can be deadly.

A survey completed by the Love and Logic Institute found 75 percent of American adults believe teenagers today face more serious, potentially life-threatening decisions than a generation ago. These decisions, combined with a strong dose of hormones and the vacations and parties that come with springtime, can challenge the most sensible teenagers.

Fortunately, there are some simple, time-tested tips for parents who want their teens to make cool decisions as the weather gets warmer.

## **Tip #1: Don't fall into the trap of thinking teens no longer need their parents.**

Because their adolescents are becoming more independent, many parents believe it's okay to leave them without supervision for hours on end. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Wise parents understand this, and they recognize teens need a watchful, yet friendly eye.

## **Tip #2: Set enforceable limits.**

Teens need and want limits. However, instead of telling your teen what they should do, experiment with telling them what *you* will do or what *you* will allow. Instead of, "Be home on time," experiment with something like, "I share the car keys with those who come home on time." Instead of, "Don't hang out with Steve. He's trouble," try, "Feel free to see Steve when I know there is adult supervision." For a free list of response examples, visit [www.loveandlogic.com/Media/enforce.pdf](http://www.loveandlogic.com/Media/enforce.pdf).

## **Tip #3: Hold them accountable with empathy and logical consequences.**

Parents who provide consequences with anger create teens who think, "When I make poor decisions, it makes others really mad. I better not get caught." Parents who replace anger with a genuine dose of empathy or sadness raise teens who know, "When I make poor decisions it makes my life really sad. For my sake, I'd better make wise ones!"

## **Tip #4: When you are too angry or worried to think — delay the consequence.**

If your teen does something that throws you off balance, buy some time by saying, "I'm going to have to do something about this. But not now ... later ... try not to worry." Take some time to calm down and get some ideas from friends.

## Spring Fever/Page Two

Every day, parents around the world are finding their lives made easier with these tips. One parent commented, “I came home from work to find my 16-year-old daughter and six of her friends had scattered pizza, chips, and dip all over my new carpet! I was furious. Luckily I remembered the advice from Love and Logic and how to delay consequences. All I managed to say was, ‘I’d better calm down first. We’ll talk later. Try not to worry.’ By the next day, she already had a good plan for selling enough of her things to hire some carpet cleaners!”

Give Love and Logic a try and find out why so many parents say it has changed their lives. Get started right away!

###

Dr. Charles Fay is a nationally known speaker, parent, and school psychologist with the Love and Logic Institute in Golden, Colo. His book, *Love and Logic Magic: When Your Kids Leave You Speechless*, provides a host of helpful tips for teaching values, as well as handling other perplexing parenting issues. For more information about Love and Logic parenting and teaching techniques, call **1-800-LUV-LOGIC** or visit **[www.loveandlogic.com](http://www.loveandlogic.com)**.