

Anchor Bay North

Principal's Corner

James Thiede



IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

- Nov. 12-7th grade Vision Screening
- November 22– 1/2 day
- November 25-26-No School-Teacher PD
- November 27-29—No School Thanksgiving break
- December 6– Movie Night 5-7pm
- December 11– Holiday Band Concert
- December 12-Holiday Choir Concert
- December 23-Jan.3-Christmas break-No School
- January 20-MLK Day-No school
- January 22,23,24,– Half Days– Final Exams
- January 24-Last day of 1st semester
- January 31– Dodgeball
- February 14-17-Winter Break

November 2024

M-Step and NWEA Reports

We are very proud at Anchor Bay NORTH for our student success in State Testing. Please see below our rankings of 41 middle schools in Macomb County:

Grade	Subject	Rank
6th	ELA	1st
6th	MATH	1st
7th	ELA	1st
7th	MATH	1st
8th	ELA	1st
8th	MATH	2nd
8th	Social Studies	2nd
8th	Science	10th

Last week your child brought home M-Step and NWEA testing reports. The M-Step reports are from the 2024 Spring testing cycle and the NWEA report is from our testing we just completed in September. Please see the sample reports in the following pages for information on how to read the reports. For more information please click on the links below:

MSTEP

<https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/student-assessment/m-step/parentstudent-information/guide-to-parent-reports>

NWEA

<https://www.nwea.org/resource-center/resource/family-guide-to-map-growth/>



SEE PAGE 2



MSTEP

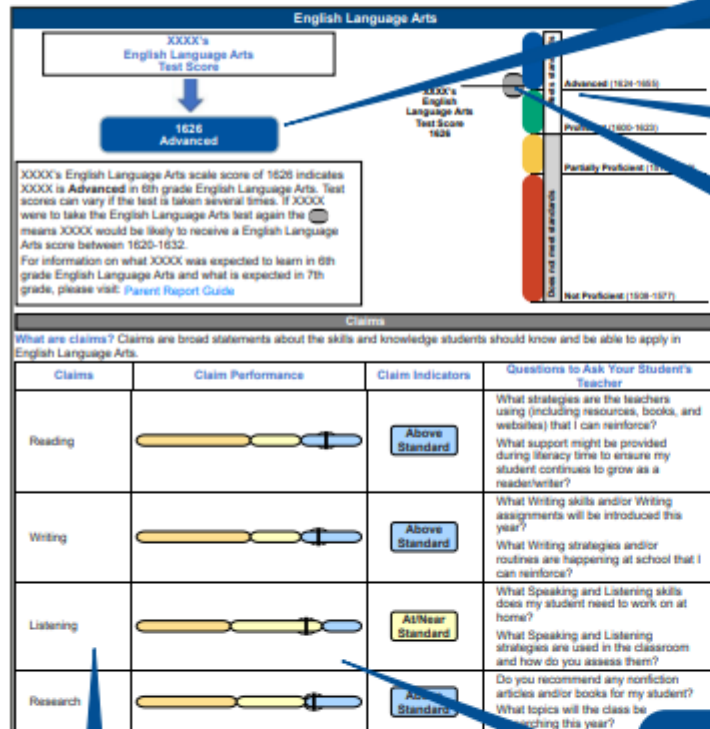
How to Read Your Child's Score Report

Michigan schools assess the progress of sixth grade students on the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress, or M-STEP. The M-STEP measures what students know and are able to do in relation to Michigan's academic standards. Students in grade 6 take M-STEP tests in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics.

M-STEP results are released in late summer to provide parents and teachers with valuable information on where students are doing well and where they might need additional support. Scores also can support instruction by helping educators better align curriculum and instruction to state standards.

Score Report Components

M-STEP results: grade 6 English Language Arts example



Student Overall Performance Level and Scale Score
Students receive a numerical scale score and, based on that score, are assigned one of four performance levels: Not Proficient, Partially Proficient, Proficient, or Advanced. This section of the report provides your student's numerical score and performance level.

Confidence Interval
Test scores can vary if the test is taken several times; this bar shows the range of scores your child would be likely to receive if they took the test another time.

Claims
Assessments in ELA and mathematics include sub-categories, called claims, which relate directly to Michigan's learning standards for those subjects. This section describes the claims that were assessed.

Claim Performance Indicators
The report shows at a glance whether your student's score on this claim shows above standard, at or near standard, or below standard. The bar chart indicates the range of possible performance within each claim. The black vertical lines indicate your student's performance.



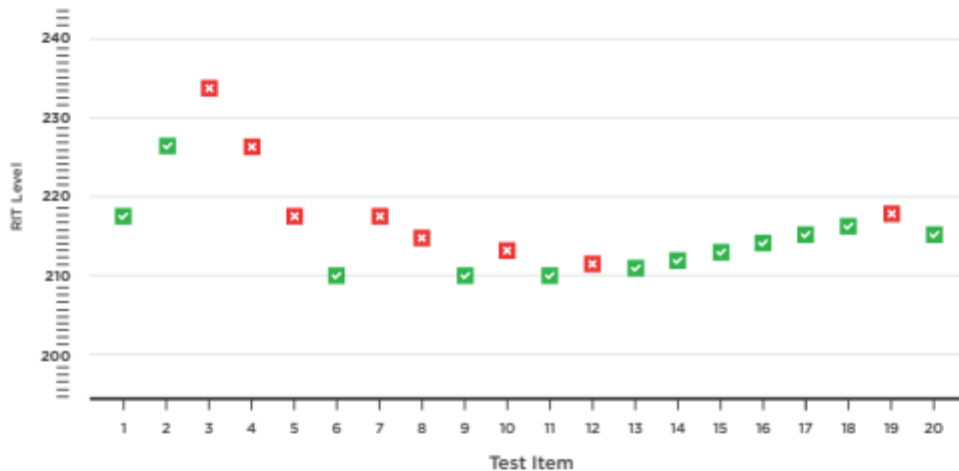
NWEA

A family guide to MAP Growth

Children learn better—and faster—when teachers have a clear picture of what students know and how they are growing academically. That's why a group of educators and researchers founded NWEA®, a not-for-profit organization that has created some of the most trusted and reliable assessment solutions available. More than 13 million students in the US and in 140 countries worldwide use MAP® Growth™.

How it works

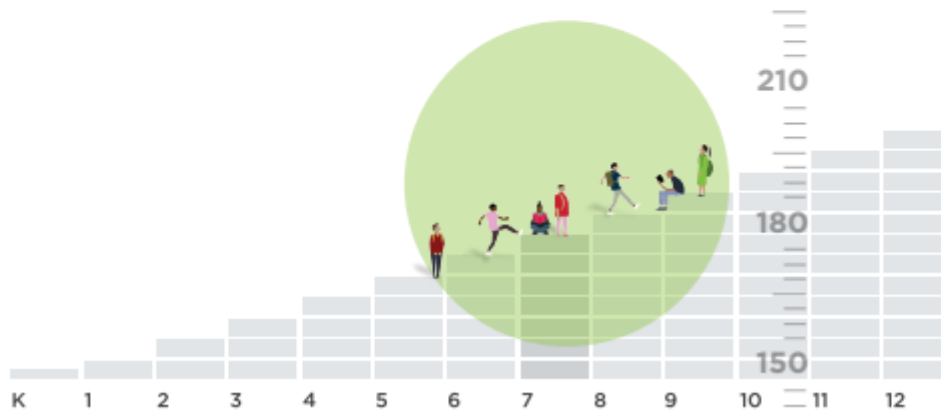
MAP Growth is a computer-adaptive test. If your child answers a question correctly, the next question is more challenging. If they answer incorrectly, the next one is easier. This type of assessment challenges top performers without overwhelming students whose skills are below grade level.



MAP Growth begins with a question at each student's grade level and adjusts the level of difficulty based on individual performance.

What it measures

MAP Growth uses a RIT scale to accurately measure what students know, regardless of their grade level. It also measures growth over time, allowing you to track your child's progress throughout the school year and across multiple years. Once your child completes a MAP Growth test, they receive a RIT score.



The RIT scale precisely measures student performance, regardless of whether they're performing on, above, or below grade level.

SEE PAGE 4



NWEA

Your child's RIT score

RIT scores have the same meaning across grade levels. If a fourth-grade student and an eighth-grade student have the same RIT score in reading, then they are testing at the same level in that subject. This stable scale allows teachers to accurately measure each student's academic growth throughout the school year and over time.

You can use your child's RIT score to help them meet their goals. For example, students can enter their RIT scores into our college explorer tool to see which colleges and universities they're on track to enter. You can also ask your child's school about educational resources that use MAP Growth RIT scores to provide personalized learning resources.

"MAP Growth is important because it allows my teacher and me to see how much I know and my percentile growth. In math, my score used to be 227 (70th percentile), but it is now 240 (87th percentile). I didn't know I was capable of so much growth, but in the end I was."

Kayla, 6th grade
Santa Ana, CA

COMMON QUESTIONS

How do schools and teachers use MAP Growth scores?

Teachers can use the scores to identify learning areas that their class should focus on, as well as monitor the growth of individual students. Principals and administrators can use the scores to see the performance and progress of a grade level, school, or the entire district.

Can MAP Growth tell me if my child is working at grade level?

Yes, but please note that MAP Growth scores are just one data point that teachers use to determine how a student is performing. Please discuss any questions that you have about your child's performance with their teacher.

How often will my child take MAP Growth tests?

Most schools give MAP Growth tests to students at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year (in the fall, winter, and spring). Some schools choose to administer tests only twice a year.

What are norms?

NWEA provides schools with norms by utilizing anonymous data from more than 10 million students around the US. Knowing the top, middle, and bottom scores of all these students combined allows teachers to compare where your child is to other students and help them grow. In addition, NWEA provides comparison data for private, accredited, English-based, international schools using MAP Growth outside the US.

Is MAP Growth a standardized test?

MAP Growth is administered periodically during the school year. Instead of asking all students the same questions, it adjusts to each child's performance—giving a more accurate measure of what they know. Teachers also receive results right away, which enables them to react more quickly.

What types of questions are on MAP Growth tests?

The MAP Growth tests include multiple choice, drag-and-drop, and other types of questions. For sample tests, visit Warmup.NWEA.org.

For tips on getting ready for MAP Growth testing, check out our blog:

nwea.org/blog/category/supporting-families

Find more family resources at nwea.org/familytoolkit



NWEA is a not-for-profit organization that supports students and educators worldwide by providing assessment solutions, insightful reports, professional learning offerings, and research services. Visit NWEA.org to find out how NWEA can partner with you to help all kids learn.

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Thank you Veterans and Active Service Members

We are proud to announce our support for American Service Men and Women. To honor our Veterans, the MJHS collected donations for Disabled American Veterans. DAV's Field of Flags empowers our community to setup up fields of American flags, all to honor local veterans and



raise critical funds to support our ill and injured heroes. Each flag represents our unwavering commitment to serving all veterans after they've sacrificed so much for our country. All donations raise critical funds to support DAV's life-changing services for veterans in need and their families. 150 American Flags will be on display in front of the school on November 8-November 22

NORTH Students Show Appreciation Through Thank-You Letters for Service Members

In a heartfelt initiative to express gratitude, students across the country have been participating in Operation Gratitude's letter-writing campaign. This program provides a special opportunity for young people to directly thank active-duty service members and veterans for their sacrifices and commitment. Through handwritten letters, students not only learn about the value of service and sacrifice but also bring encouragement and warmth to the recipients, some of whom are stationed far from home or recovering in hospitals.

The act of writing a letter allows students to reflect on the freedoms and safety they enjoy and express personal thanks to those who help protect those rights. Teachers and



students alike have embraced the project, finding it a meaningful way to foster a sense of empathy, patriotism, and connection within their classrooms. These letters often become cherished keepsakes for the service members who receive them, providing a powerful reminder of the support they have from people back home.

Anchor Bay North

Principal's Corner

James Thiede



Red Ribbon Week -

Our counselors, Mrs. Ahedo and Mr. Hickey visited all classrooms during Red Ribbon Week to warn students about the dangers of vaping. Red Ribbon Week is a national campaign held annually to encourage students, families, and communities to live drug-free lives. It began in 1985 to honor DEA agent Enrique "Kiki" Camarena, who lost his life in the fight against drug trafficking. Today, Red Ribbon Week serves as a reminder of the importance of making healthy, drug-free choices. Schools and organizations across the country host activities, educational events, and discussions to raise awareness about the dangers of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco and to promote a safe, drug-free lifestyle.

Vaping Risks

Vaping is becoming increasingly common among young people, but it's important to understand the real risks it brings, especially for students in middle school. While it might seem harmless, vaping exposes users to harmful chemicals and nicotine, a highly addictive substance also found in cigarettes.

Nicotine affects the developing brains of young people, impacting areas linked to attention, learning, and self-control. Even vape products labeled as "nicotine-free" often contain chemicals that can damage the lungs. The addiction to nicotine can start quickly, and quitting can be very challenging.

According to recent data, **about 10% of middle school students in the U.S. have tried vaping**—a number that's unfortunately on the rise each year. Many students don't realize the long-term health impacts and addiction risks involved.

Staying away from vaping is one of the best ways to protect their health and well-being, now and in the future. Please talk with your children about the dangers of vaping and help them understand the importance of making safe, healthy decisions.

School Security

In an effort to increase school security, all Anchor Bay Schools have developed the following protocols for main office visitors. Parents signing out their children will utilize the two communication system in the school main office vestibule and remain there while their son/daughter is called down to be dismissed. In addition, Anchor Bay North is a closed campus for lunch. Any lunches from outside restaurants must be brought in by parents only. Outside deliveries are not allowed.

Michigan Junior Honor Society

Congratulations to the 63 8th-grade students who were selected for Michigan Junior Honor Society for 24-25 school year. We held our induction ceremony on October 23rd to honor the hard work of our new members

Homework Free Thanksgiving

Teachers will NOT assign any homework or studying over the Thanksgiving break. We want everyone to have a relaxing and restful Thanksgiving!

Middle School Parents

In some Principal's Corner articles, and in future editions, you will find information about Middle School-aged children. The information comes from a newsletter called "Middle School Parents" produced by "The Parent Institute". I hope you find the information insightful.

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FALL PEP ASSEMBLY



MJHS Induction Ceremony



SEE PAGE 8



Middle School Parents

November 2024
Vol. 28, No. 3

Anchor Bay Middle School North

still make the difference!



Too much stress can decrease your child's learning potential

Middle schoolers often have a lot on their plates—and on their minds. They can easily become overwhelmed, stressed and anxious. And when their anxiety goes up, their grades can go down.

If your child seems stressed, offer ways to relax. Your child could:

- **Enjoy time with a friend.** Suggest they take a walk outside or do something that makes them laugh, such as watching a favorite funny movie.
- **Spend time on a hobby** (other than playing games online). Focusing on an enjoyable activity reduces stress.
- **Stretch.** Stretching increases blood flow and can lower stress levels. Tell your child to try a few minutes of slow, gentle stretches.
- **Breathe deeply.** A short session of slow deep breathing can calm your child when feeling overwhelmed. Practicing it for a brief time each day can lower your child's overall stress levels.
- **Take a power nap.** Sleep is vital for stress reduction. A 15- to 30-minute nap in the afternoon can give your child an extra boost. Keep naps under one hour.
- **Write in a journal.** Writing can help your child clarify thoughts and feelings. Journaling can also be a great tool for solving problems.
- **Listen to favorite music.** Music can improve your middle schooler's mood and help release negative emotions.

Writing letters helps your child build vital skills



Middle schoolers are more likely to send a text than to sit down and write a good old-fashioned letter. Yet letter writing is still a very useful skill. Writing letters helps middle schoolers:

- **Practice sentence structure,** grammar and punctuation.
- **Strengthen memory and storytelling skills.** Most people share their experiences when they write letters.
- **Improve communication skills.** Students get practice expressing thoughts clearly and effectively.

Here are three strategies to get your child writing letters:

1. **Keep a writing basket** in a visible spot. Fill it with everything someone would need to write a letter—paper, pens, envelopes, stamps and an address book.
2. **Challenge your child** to write one letter every week. Your middle schooler could write to a friend or relative.
3. **Collect postcards** when your family visits a new place. Ask your child to write about the experience and send the cards to relatives and friends.



Motivate your middle schooler to start thinking about the future



College is years away, but that doesn't mean your child shouldn't start thinking about it and making plans now.

Studies show that college graduates are more likely than non-graduates to:

- **Live healthier, longer lives.**
- **Stay employed.**
- **Enjoy their jobs.**
- **Change jobs more easily.**
- **Earn significantly higher salaries.**

To help your child begin considering future options:

- **Talk about interests.** Ask your child, "What do you like to do? What are you passionate about?" Whether it's graphic design or physical fitness, there's likely a higher education program geared toward it. Your middle schooler won't be enrolling anytime soon, but now is the time to "plant the seed" and get your child thinking about ways to continue education after high school.

- **Encourage goal setting.** What would your child like to be in 10 years? A college graduate? A successful executive? Ask what your child envisions and encourage creating a plan to get there. Specifically, talk about what your middle schooler can do now (such as studying harder or taking tougher classes) to reach goals.
- **Widen horizons.** There are too many careers to count, and odds are your child hasn't heard of many of them. So go online together and research various jobs. Get your child excited about the different options available.

"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."

—Eleanor Roosevelt

It's time to give your child's technology skills a little boost



Most middle schoolers are very savvy when it comes to the latest apps and computer programs.

But there are additional technology skills that can enhance your child's success in school. Here are a few:

- **Judgment.** Some information online is excellent and helpful. And a lot of it is trash. Can your child tell the difference? Talk about how to determine if sources are credible. Do they present facts or opinions? Is the information up to date?
- **Planning.** How will your middle schooler use online information?

Will your child add it to a research paper? Use it to gain a deeper understanding of a particular concept or subject?

- **Creativity.** Most students know how to create online presentations and multimedia projects. But are there new ways to present information? Challenge your child to explore and use a variety of presentation tools.
- **Problem-solving.** If your child has difficulty using a digital device, don't immediately step in. Instead, suggest ways your student could attempt to solve the problem first.

Are you helping your child work with teachers?



It's normal for middle schoolers to like some teachers better than others. Learning to get along with authority

figures is an important life lesson.

Are you helping your child get along with teachers? Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below to find out:

- ___ **1. Do you remind your child** of all students' responsibility to be courteous and respectful to teachers?
- ___ **2. Do you help your child keep** feelings in perspective? Students don't have to like a teacher to learn something in that class.
- ___ **3. Do you help figure out** the cause of any issues your child is having in a class?
- ___ **4. Do you encourage your child** to try to work with teachers to resolve issues that arise?
- ___ **5. Do you ask to speak** to a teacher if your child is unable to work through an issue independently?

How well are you doing?

Mostly *yes* answers mean you're helping your middle schooler learn how to work with teachers. For *no* answers, try those ideas.

Middle School
Parents
still make the difference!

Practical Ideas for Parents
to Help Their Children.

For subscription information call or write:
The Parent Institute, 1-800-756-5525,
P.O. Box 7474, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7474.
Fax: 1-800-216-3667.

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Teach your child the value of persistence and determination



Sometimes it may seem easier to give up on a tough assignment than to push through and complete it. However, that won't get your child very far in life.

Persistence and determination are essential parts of learning. These traits help large projects and difficult assignments seem achievable—and lead to better grades.

To encourage your child to see challenging schoolwork through to the end:

- **Notice progress.** Say things like, "You're really coming along with that. If you keep on like this, you'll have something to be proud of."
- **Encourage regular study breaks.** Try one five-minute break after 25 minutes of working. Breaks are a time to relax and recharge.

- **Teach positive self-talk.** Saying things like, "I am going to do this" or "I know I can do a great job on this," can motivate your middle schooler through the most difficult academic tasks.
- **Be a role model.** If you've been putting off a big chore, decide to see it through. Say, "Today, I am going to work until I get this finished." Then, follow through.
- **Treat your child to something special** when a challenging task is complete. You could watch a movie together or cook a fun dinner. When your child shows persistence through a tough task, it's definitely time to celebrate!

Source: M. Borba, *Parents Do Make a Difference: How to Raise Kids with Solid Character, Strong Minds and Caring Hearts*, Jossey-Bass.

Open communication plays a critical role in school safety



Schools today take many steps to keep students safe. But they can't do it alone—they need families' help.

One of the most effective ways you can contribute to a safe school environment is to talk together every day about what's going on at school and in your child's life.

- Have open discussions about:
- **The school discipline policy.** Talk about the reasons for certain rules. Review the consequences for breaking the rules.
 - **The school's safety and security procedures.** If you don't know what they are, find out.
 - **Personal safety issues,** such as ways to keep safe when traveling to and from school.

- **Your family's values,** rules and expectations for your child.
 - **The impact of violence in the media**—TV, books, video games, music and movies.
 - **Strategies for solving problems** peacefully and diffusing tense situations.
 - **Concerns about friends** or classmates who may be dangerous to themselves or others.
 - **Social media** and the need to use it responsibly.
 - **The importance of telling** a teacher or other adult if your child sees something that doesn't seem right.
- And remember: If you hear something that concerns you, inform the school immediately. Schools are safest when families, students and educators work together.

Q: I know that attendance is important, but we're planning to travel over the holidays next month, and my seventh grader will miss one week of school. How can I keep my child from falling behind?

Questions & Answers

A: First, take a look at your itinerary. Is it possible to alter your plans so your trip falls within the school's break? That's the only way to ensure your child won't miss out on important learning.

If your travel dates are written in stone, though, here are three things you can do to show that school matters and help your child stay on top of things:

1. Talk to your child's teachers.

Well in advance, explain the situation and ask if they're planning to assign readings or worksheets while you are away. See if your child can get started early. Find out which teachers maintain updated classroom websites, and see if your child can follow each day's lesson from afar. But keep in mind: Teachers are under no obligation to adjust to your vacation schedule.

2. Focus on learning while you are away. Explore museums and cultural or historical attractions and discuss them as a family. Try to immerse your middle schooler in educational activities that are not available at home.

3. Set aside time for reading and writing. Even if your child has no assigned work to complete, insist on reading for pleasure and writing about the trip in a notebook. A vacation from school should not be a vacation from learning!



It Matters: Positive Discipline

Effective ways to handle your child's back talk



Even the child who gave you no trouble in elementary school may develop a "smart mouth" in middle school. At this stage in life, adolescents begin to question and challenge. They often come out with harp, dismissive and often disrespectful statements.

To curb your child's back talk:

- **Be a role model.** Your middle schooler hears rude and mocking language everywhere. But your child shouldn't hear it from you. Treat your child with respect, even when behavior doesn't merit it.
- **Point out** your child's language. Say something like "That is disrespectful" or "Your tone is not appropriate."
- **Consider your child's intent.** Sometimes, what seems like back talk is your child's attempt to give an opinion that differs from yours. Kids are allowed to have different opinions, but they need to learn how to express them appropriately. Demonstrate how by restating your child's points using a respectful tone.
- **Use consequences.** Calmly say how you feel about the way your child speaks to you. State the consequences: "You are allowed to be angry with me. But you are not allowed to speak disrespectfully. If you continue to do so, you will lose your phone for a week." Then, follow through!
- **Acknowledge improvement.** If your child is making an effort to cut the back talk, say you notice.

Talk to your middle schooler about the importance of respect

For school to be a productive place to learn, students must learn to respect themselves and others, including teachers, school staff and classmates. Still, many kids aren't quite sure what respect really involves.

Talk with your child about the role respect plays in:

- **Behavior.** Your child should always think before acting. "Would I like to be treated this way?" "Will this action give me a positive result without producing a negative one for others?"
- **Disagreements.** Your child can disagree with someone and still be respectful. Demonstrate how to choose words carefully.
- **Property.** Your middle schooler should take care of belongings and return borrowed items on time and in the same or better condition.



- **Friendships.** Your child should choose friends who treat people with respect. Say that friends' behavior may also be seen as a reflection on your child.

Consistency and compassion are keys to effective discipline



There is no one-size-fits-all method of correcting middle schoolers' behavior, especially since they are constantly growing and changing. However, you can adopt a consistent discipline approach. To do this:

- **Control your emotions.** It's tough to think clearly when you're agitated. Avoid imposing consequences for misbehavior when you're angry. Instead, take a moment to calm down before addressing the issue.
- **Notice emotions.** If your child is upset, acknowledge those feelings. Give your child time to regain composure before further discussion.
- **Listen to your child.** This doesn't mean letting your child get out of a consequence. It means demonstrating respect even as you enforce the consequence.
- **Draw the line.** Flexibility is important, but some issues should be non-negotiable. Make sure you are clear about your zero-tolerance policy for things like smoking and substance abuse.