



Developmentally your child is in a place where they have a stronger sense of who they are and how they [identify themselves](#). They are more comfortable differentiating themselves from the group by taking pride in their differences, while still working to be part of the group. Their beliefs will shape their social experiences and relationships with both their peers and with adult authority figures. Taking the time to have meaningful conversations about choices they make and being clear about your family's values keeps things from being ambiguous and helps your child to feel rooted.

Teens are neurologically [wired to take risks](#). This is biologically important if they are to have the ability to break away from their parents and live independent lives. Risks do not have to be negative. Positive risk taking is also something that will fill that need. What does positive risk taking look like? Trying out for a team, learning an instrument, starting or joining a club, and auditioning for a chorus are a few examples of healthy risks that your student can take. It's the act of putting themselves out there to try something new and exciting. It's not the process of filling their time with activities, its the meaningfulness of the activity itself that fills the need. These are things that can help your teen resist [peer pressure](#) to take part in negative risks.

Teachers hope that sophomores are developing a confident ability to interpret information and ask thoughtful questions that access the depth of the content being covered. They are capable of organizing, interpreting, and presenting their research and data with improved attention to directions. They may still need reminders to ask for help, but their capability for completing independent work without getting as distracted by their peers has improved since they were a freshman. Teachers expect students more and more to take responsibility for their education. For example, making up missed work and scheduling a time to meet with a teacher to discuss points of confusion or a poor test result. In addition, it is important for students to begin fostering a strong working relationship with their teachers because these are the people who they will go to for a recommendation or letter of reference.

For more on developmental stages and parenting information, contact your Thrive Parent Liaison, Lori Swenson at lsvenson@bssd72.org or 995-4281.