

Safety behind the wheel  
Preparing your teen  
for the open road

Healthy Habits  
School cafeterias get  
a healthy makeover

Growing up with ADHD  
What to expect  
through the years

# YOUTH EMPOWERMENT



PHOTO: VERONICA HINOJOSA

## TOMORROW'S LEADERS

Former **Boys & Girls Club of Chicago** members share stories about the impact the club had on their lives.

2

TIPS

FOR EFFECTIVE  
COMMUNICATION  
WITH YOUR CHILD

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## CHALLENGES

Why do some children in our most challenged neighborhoods **grow up to be successful, productive adults**, while others become mired in crime, addiction, or hopelessness?

## Ensuring a stable future

**T**his we know: children thrive on high quality after-school programs led by dedicated adult mentors. Boys & Girls of Chicago combine these—quality programs plus effective group mentoring—into one great experience. The Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago alums featured in these pages epitomize what is possible with positive adult influence and programs that provide a strong foundation for success.

Children in our city face more challenges than ever. Teen unemployment is at an all-time high, and more parents are working multiple jobs or looking for work. Therefore, youth must contend with a longer unstructured / unsupervised gap after school. Often, gangs, crime, and drugs fill this void.



**James G. Keane**  
President and  
CEO, Boys &  
Girls Clubs of  
Chicago

#### After-school after-thought

The “in-school” experience is also critical, and deserves significant focus. However, we should not treat “after school” as an after-thought:

- Kids who participated in after-school programs showed better “meet or exceed” standards on ISAT Math & Reading tests than their classmates who did not participate. They also graduated from high school and achieved a higher level of education than the overall U.S. population.

- Children who attended after-school programs were 30 percent less likely to engage in criminal

activities than their peers.

- Quality leadership and character programs coupled with community service projects have a positive, long-term impact on youth—academically, socially and personally.

- Health and fitness: Boys & Girls Clubs alums resoundingly report that the Club had a positive impact in teaching them about health and fitness. This outcome is key, at a time when schools are cutting back on physical education, athletic programs, and even recess.

- Every \$1.00 invested in after-school programs saves the city \$2.50 in crime-related costs. No wonder that Mayor Emanuel and other leaders are focused on the vulnerable after-school hours. At all levels, public and private, our community must support quality after-school programs.

#### Make a difference

**Enroll kids in programs outside of school**—to give them a sense of belonging and keep them engaged and focused on their futures.

**Volunteer to work with young people**—especially in a challenged community. Children need consistent and caring adult mentors who encourage them to think about their future and their potential to succeed.

**Support and advocate for after-school programs and organizations.** These programs would not exist but for charitable and public support.

Our investment in our City’s youth will reap many wonderful returns.

**JAMES G. KEANE,**  
PRESIDENT AND CEO,  
BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF CHICAGO

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#### WE RECOMMEND



**Specific learning disabilities**  
Understanding your child’s unique challenges

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# MEDIA PLANET

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT,  
FIRST EDITION, FEBRUARY 2013

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**Distributed within:**  
Chicago Sun-Times, February 2013  
This section was created by Mediaplanet and did not involve the Chicago Sun-Times or its Editorial Departments.



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# INSPIRATION

## BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF CHICAGO ALUM SHARE THEIR INSPIRATIONAL JOURNEYS

Great success  
begins with  
great mentors

	 <p><b>Aaron Williams</b> Former Director of the Peace Corps</p>	 <p><b>David Rojas</b> Student, Connecticut College</p>	 <p><b>Mercedes Mora-Nowinski</b> Paramedic Field Chief</p>	 <p><b>Nneka Onyezia</b> Child Psychologist</p>	 <p><b>Yolandis McCaskill</b> Student, The University of Notre Dame</p>
<p>My club</p>	<p>Louis L. Valentine Boys &amp; Girls Club (1958-1961)</p>	<p>Little Village Boys &amp; Girls Club (2001-2010)</p>	<p>Former Kiwanis Boys &amp; Girls Club (1971-1984)</p>	<p>Robert R. McCormick Boys &amp; Girls Club (1987-1999)</p>	<p>Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boys &amp; Girls Club (2003-2012)</p>
<p>About me</p>	<p><b>Aaron S. Williams</b> joined the Peace Corps as a volunteer after graduating from Chicago State University. He earned an MBA from the University of Wisconsin and dedicated himself to a lifelong career of developing and implementing aid and assistance programs for people in nearly every continent. He has held leadership positions in business, government and the non-profit sectors. In 2009, he was appointed Director of the Peace Corps by President Barack Obama and oversaw 9,000 volunteers in 75 countries.</p>	<p><b>David is currently</b> studying abroad in Seville Spain. This unique cultural and academic experience is miles away from his home in Chicago's Little Village community where he dodged relentless gang violence as he navigated between his high school, home and the Boys &amp; Girls Clubs of Chicago during his youth. David developed strong relationships and became involved in positive leadership programs. He was selected Boys &amp; Girls Clubs of Chicago 2009 Youth of the Year, and later became the runner-up for the State of Illinois. David became a Posse Scholar and will soon earn his college degree.</p>	<p><b>Employed by the</b> Chicago Fire Department since 1987, Mercedes is a Paramedic Field Chief, supervising more than 20 paramedics and EMTs. She received her paramedic license through the City Colleges of Chicago and graduated from Columbia College in 1985 with a bachelor's of arts in fine arts photography. In 1995, she became the first female fire photographer in the department. Mercedes continues to be involved as a vital volunteer at the Logan Square Boys &amp; Girls Club.</p>	<p><b>Nneka Onyezia</b> is a child and adolescent psychologist for NorthShore University Health System. She specializes in treating young people who have suffered abuse or trauma. She is a graduate of Yale University and the Division of Psychology at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine, where she earned a PhD in Clinical Psychology.</p>	<p><b>Aside from the perils</b> of drugs and violence associated with growing up on the West Side, McCaskill overcame significant tragedy in 2009 after surviving a near fatal car crash. After months of recovery, she returned to school with renewed focus, realizing that she was given a second chance at life. She graduated as valedictorian of her high school class, was an active leader in her Club, worked part-time, and assisted her grandmother. She received a full scholarship to The University of Notre Dame where she is currently studying biology.</p>
<p>Why did you join the boys and girls club?</p>	<p><b>My parents worked</b> full-time and the Club was a safe and happy place for me to be. It was an oasis in an urban desert in Chicago's South Side where I got to try new things, make new friends and be protected from bullies and gangs.</p>	<p><b>In the dangerous</b> and chaotic area where I grew up, children want desperately to belong to something to navigate the uncertainty and quell the fear. Sometimes that sense of belonging is found in gangs and destructive influences. I'm thankful that my family and the mentors at Boys &amp; Girls Clubs never allowed me to feel I was alone in the world.</p>	<p><b>The Club was</b> our safe haven from the streets while our parents worked. My parents worked hard to provide for us seven kids, so we had a lot of idle time by ourselves. Without the Club, my life would be quite different. The high school dropout rate was very high and teenage pregnancy was almost the norm.</p>	<p><b>My parents worked</b> full-time and this was a fun place to be after school where I could get to know kids from other schools. It certainly was one of the safer places to be for a young person growing up in the Uptown neighborhood during that time.</p>	<p><b>I moved to Chicago</b> when I was 12 years old. The Club is where I was able to meet other kids, have fun, learn about computers and stay safe from some of the violence and drugs that were part of my community. The friends I met at the Club then are still my best friends today.</p>
<p>What did the boys and girls club teach you?</p>	<p><b>The Club is where</b> I began to recognize the power of service and helping others. My early experience was so positive and gave me a greater appreciation for the need to support young people and the desire to become a champion for youth development in so many ways.</p>	<p><b>Following an attack</b> by local gang members, the Boys &amp; Girls Club became my second home. The Club's amenities and programs were great but the caring adults who listened to us and guided us without judging are the reason young people like me kept coming back. Kids need help navigating opportunities and believing that we deserve better things in life. I'm fortunate to have a loving and supportive family, but I still needed mentors who inspired me.</p>	<p><b>The Club instilled</b> in me the importance of setting goals, volunteerism and the power of education. Through the Club, I received a scholarship to assist in my higher education. I traveled abroad to England and Germany for Keystone conferences (teen leadership groups). I learned empathy for those in need and made lifelong friends through the Club.</p>	<p><b>I really enjoyed</b> working as a summer camp counselor at the Club when I turned 16. During this time, I was able to get to know the staff on a different level. I began to feel more responsible and realized the positive impact and influence I could have on younger kids.</p>	<p><b>I learned that</b> there was a more positive environment possible for me than what surrounded me. From leadership and service groups, to computers and sports, to a safe and quiet place to study, to public speaking opportunities and scholarships, the Club has given me so many opportunities to learn and to experience great things. The staff encouraged us to make better choices and to expect better of ourselves. That guidance has helped me make goals and plan to achieve them.</p>

## NEWS



## 10 TIPS

## Helping families smooth the road to agreement

- 1** Introduce the agreement before your teen drives solo. It's difficult to introduce limitations and consequences after your teen has begun to drive alone. Your rules should be in place before you hand over the family car keys.
- 2** Give your teen a copy of the agreement to look over before you schedule a family discussion.
- 3** Both parents (and guardians) should go over the agreement without the teen to make sure they share the same expectations, as well as a commitment to following through on the consequences for infractions.
- 4** Consider including younger family members in the discussion of the newsletters and parent-teen driving agreement. This reinforces the idea that a new driver is now in a position to make decisions that affect the entire family. It's also a good opportunity to link driving and responsibility in the minds of all family members. The way you deal with your teen driver sets a precedent for younger family members who will also become drivers one day.
- 5** Set aside uninterrupted time to go over the agreement together. You'll be demonstrating that the agreement is a commitment that you take seriously. Pick a time when everyone is relaxed—not when tempers may be high over some other issue or when you are tired, hungry, stressed or preoccupied.
- 6** Stand firm on basic driving restrictions, such as other teen passengers or driving after curfew.
- 7** Invite discussion about points that do not bear directly on safety, such as who is responsible for car care and keeping the tank filled. This can help you avoid aggravation caused by a clash of assumptions. Do you want your teen to pay for gas? Return the family car with at least half a tank? Wash the car every week? Clean out the interior? If so, let them know.
- 8** Listen to your teen when you discuss the newsletters. Until this point, most of your conversations about driving have probably focused on how to operate a vehicle. This is the opportunity to discuss the privilege of driving as a new level of participation in your community. If your teen becomes argumentative or defensive about restrictions, try to hear any underlying fears or concerns they may have.
- 9** Treat the discussion as an agreement, not a laundry list of rules and penalties. Emphasize the opportunity to earn more driving privileges with good performance over time. Let your teen know that you are also making commitments to them.
- 10** Sign the agreement and ask your teen to sign it. Put the signed agreement somewhere both parties have access to it. Additionally, be sure to randomly conduct performance reviews throughout the year upon implementation.

**SOURCE: AAA**  
editorial@mediaplanet.com

# The key to safe driving is open communication

TIP

1

CREATE A  
PARENT-TEEN  
DRIVING  
AGREEMENT

Remember how careful you were when you brought your child home for the first time? You made sure they were buckled up in the car seat and you were extra conscious of your driving. Remember when they moved to the booster seat and you made sure they were always secure and properly restrained? Well the time for your child to get behind the wheel is approaching, so it's up to you to do your part.

## Stay involved

Car crashes are the leading cause of death among 16-19-year-olds. Even though this age group represents less than seven percent of the U.S. population, these drivers are involved in more than 14 percent of all fatal crashes. As a parent, there are some protections you can put into place. AAA has

worked to create an online newsletter system that regularly sends parents newsletters and links to important teen driver safety information. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) evaluated the paper-based version of the program and found that once parents start, they stay involved. Even more important, the research shows that teens exhibit less risky driving behavior and are more aware of the consequences of their actions.

## Limit risks

A significant step parents can take is to create a parent-teen driving agreement. A parent-teen driving agreement is a tool that sets limits on driving. Families can use it to spell out expectations, responsibilities and consequences for good or bad driving behavior.

Even if your state has graduated driver's licensing laws, you should still develop a parent-teen driving agreement. Traffic safety experts and researchers at NIH believe it's a good idea to limit new drivers' exposure to high-risk driving conditions during the first 12 months after they are licensed, when they are most inexperienced. Crash rates are high during the first 1,000 miles and six months of driving, even for young drivers who have logged a lot of supervised practice sessions. In fact, the American Academy of Pediatrics reports that 16-year-olds are 20 times more likely to have a motor vehicle collision than the general population.

Preparing your family for the road is essential to ensure safety. Online programs provide you with the tools you need to help keep your teen driver safe. However, safety starts with you - remember, when it comes to teen driving, you can never be over-prepared.



## DID YOU KNOW?

In a recent year-long study, the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety reported that roughly half of parents said they wanted their teen to get "a lot of practice" before getting a driver's license. But on average parents reported teens drove less than two hours per week. When asked why their teen didn't receive more practice, nearly 70 percent of parents cited busy schedules for both themselves and their teen, exposing a need for both parents and teens to prioritize driver training and practice. —Source: AAA

**SOURCE: AAA**  
editorial@mediaplanet.com



# INSPIRATION

**Question:** How can we, as a nation, empower kids to establish healthy eating habits at an early age?

**Answer:** Work together to implement proactive programs at home, in school and in communities.

## Students are making healthier choices in their school cafeterias



Updated school nutrition programs open the door to increased wellness with a new range of tasty and appealing choices. PHOTO: RICK BRADY/SNA

Learning to make the right food choices helps students succeed in the classroom and beyond. These days, school cafeterias are empowering kids to make

“Students are far more likely to eat their vegetables in the cafeteria if they have already tried them at home!”

healthy decisions about what they consume.

School nutrition professionals have been reworking school menus—swapping out white bread for whole wheat, preparing leaner versions of student favorites, and developing delicious and nutritious recipes. New federal nutrition standards build on this success by requiring school cafeterias to offer more whole grains, a wider variety of fruits, vegetables and legumes, and meals with fewer calories and less fat and sodium.



### GET THE FACTS ABOUT SCHOOL MEALS!

- New federal nutrition standards require more whole grains, fruits and vegetables, and less sodium, calories and trans-fat in school meals.
- Cafeterias offer legumes, dark green and orange vegetable choices every week.
- Federal law prohibits the sale of soda in the cafeteria - every school meal comes with low-fat or fat-free milk.
- Student favorites have gotten a healthy makeover! School pizza is prepared with a whole grain crust, low-fat cheese and low-sodium sauce.

Visit School Nutrition Association's website for parents, [www.TrayTalk.org](http://www.TrayTalk.org), for more information and healthy recipes to try at home. Follow us on Twitter @schoollunch and like us on Facebook at [www.Facebook.com/TrayTalk](http://www.Facebook.com/TrayTalk).

### Tasty menu options

The standards also require students to take at least one fruit or vegetable with every meal, but we all have a role to play in making sure students actually try those healthy choices.

Cafeterias are encouraging students to get involved in the menu planning process by organizing student taste tests to identify healthier menu options that students like. Some schools host produce-of-the-month promotions and offer free samples to introduce students to unfamiliar fruits and vegetables before they

encounter them in the cafeteria.

### Working together

Parents can make a difference too by getting kids involved in family meal preparation and talking to them about the benefits of a healthy diet. Students are far more likely to eat their vegetables in the cafeteria if they have already tried them at home!

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DON'T MISS!



### Want to create a math whiz?

Consider board games. Playing board games may not transform your child into a math prodigy, but recent studies suggest that a strong pattern exists between board game play and developing basic math skills. In comparison to video games, many board games aim to teach academic skills such as counting, logic, memory and strategy. Set aside time to play a board game with your child each week and there's a good chance you'll give their math test scores a boost.

SOURCE: SYLVAN LEARNING  
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Learning

4

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## INSIGHT

My son has ADHD. I venture to think how ADHD will affect my son through his life.



# ADHD through the years

Kids can be a handful. I can think of times my own child, as early as preschool would tear through the house, shouting, fighting, climbing on furniture and leaving a path of destruction everywhere he went. No activities would ever hold his interest for an extended period of time. There's countless times where he would dart off into a crowd of people without warning, seemingly unaware of any dangers. My son has ADHD. I venture to think how ADHD will affect my son through his life.

## Middle years

Many children with ADHD are identified during elementary school. Patterns of academic frustration and failure, social issues and criticism from parents and/or teachers build in elementary school to the point where other disorders associated may begin to develop. They become frustrated with their lack of success and become defiant and disorderly. Many children will also suffer low self-esteem due to their inability to achieve a level of success equal to their peers. Children with ADHD in middle school are at a high risk for academic failure. The likelihood of repeating a grade or being placed into special education increases. It's of dire importance in during these years of a child's life



Inattentiveness in adolescence can turn into disorganization in adulthood. PHOTO: ISTOCK.COM

that parents begin communicating with healthcare professionals and teachers. This is the only way to effectively address a child's needs and ensure the proper treatment methods are being put into place.

## Adolescence

According to the Attention Deficit Disorder Association, as many 80 percent of children diagnosed with ADHD in middle school continue to show signs of over-activity and inattention into adolescence. Adjusting

to school, work, and adult life can prove to be tough, especially with decreased parental oversight as we age. Many milestones come during teenage years; a first boyfriend or girlfriend, receiving a driver's license and preparation for life as an adult. With all of these comes added stress. Those stresses also provide healthcare professionals with a much more difficult task of helping treat a teen that has all of these mounting social issues. Teens may often be reluctant to accept any

type of medical treatment, including medication that they willingly took as a child, counseling, tutoring or any other type of treatment.

## Adulthood

Over the past decade we've begun to recognize that ADHD continues to effect individuals into college and adulthood. This is when ADHD becomes much more socially debilitating. Holding a conversation for an adult with ADHD can often times be difficult. Adults with ADHD have

shown to be significantly worse in job interviews or other situations which require good oral communication. What often times is unknown to people with ADHD is that it is a highly heritable disorder. Many times adults with ADHD who become parents will have a child with ADHD. This presents an even more difficult challenge since they have to now manage their child's symptoms of ADHD while effectively managing their own. They will have to ensure they are developing a routine while also developing structure in the home.

It's important to remember that ADHD is a medical condition. It is not a result of bad parenting, laziness or disorganization. It's a medical condition that is highly treatable. A diagnosis of ADHD in your child is not a diagnosis of failure. It exists and it affects individual's differently throughout life, but with the right tools it can be managed. "If you think you or your child have ADHD or are recently diagnosed, you are not alone," says Ruth Hughs, PhD, chief executive officer of CHADD. "Get evaluated, get educated, choose a treatment option and join a support group. Life will get better."



# INSPIRATION



Difficultly in the classroom may be due to the stress and frustration caused by a child's learning disability. PHOTO: ISTOCK.COM

# What to expect when your child has a learning disability

**■ Question:** How can adults best help children with a learning disability?

**■ Answer:** Communication between parents, teachers and medical professionals will help develop goals and objectives for the child.

Often a child's teacher will notice the first symptoms of a Specific Learning Disability (SLD). Parents may also notice different symptoms from those the teacher sees. That's why it is so important for teacher and parents to share notes on the development of a child. These conversations may lead to an evaluation for a diagnosis of SLD and eligibility for special edu-

cation services.

Teachers might see basic word confusion, consistent reading and spelling errors, or difficulty learning basic math.

Parents might see problems doing homework, dreading school days, or trouble learning numbers and the alphabet.

## Individualized education plan

The child may be given help in an early intervention support process called Response to Intervention (RTI). Each school can implement RTI differently, but parents should always be involved in the process. According to Federal law, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), parents have the right to

write a letter to the school principal requesting a special education comprehensive evaluation for their child. A sample letter can be found on the Learning Disabilities Association of America, [ldaamerica.org](http://ldaamerica.org). Individualized education plan

If a child is eligible for special education services, the parent(s) and the school team develop and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) based on the child's Present Levels of Performance. The plan contains specific techniques for the special education teacher to use in teaching the child and instructional methods for the general education classroom.

Specific Learning Disabilities are brain based, often complex, and not easy to understand or resolve. Some schools prefer to have children with

disabilities taught in the general education classroom with the special education teacher co-teaching with the general education teacher. This system is called "inclusion". It is thought by some that children with learning disabilities respond well in this system. However, many more may not learn and progress.

A number of children with SLD and/or ADHD may need special education services using intense, direct, explicit instruction, delivered in a special education classroom, one to one or in small group instruction. Parents have the right to request that their child is taught in that setting.

## Goals and objectives


Teacher should frequently test the

child and compare the child's progress to the Present Levels of Performance on the IEP. As the child progresses, new goals and objectives are written into the plan. This progress continues until the child reaches grade level. Some children need continued Special Education services to provide ongoing support with reading, math, written languages, homework, and organizational problems.

Parents and teachers working together and comprehensive special education services are the secret to success for many children with specific learning disabilities.

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# **Brave is SEEING THE PERSON BEHIND THE ADHD**

**Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)  
can make social situations difficult.**

Get tips, tools, and resources for managing ADHD at home, in school, and in social situations.



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