

## **Parents to Parents Comments on Senior Year** **“Look How Far We’ve Come”**

The JBS Family Network in conjunction with the JBS Counseling Department hope these guidelines will be helpful as we strive to promote a safe, healthy path during this exciting time in our children’s lives.

### The Age/The Environment

For some students, a predominant theme in high school is the overriding idea that he or she has outgrown your rules, your curfews and your behavioral expectations. Your teen’s constant refrain may very well be...

*“A few months from now, are you going to be able to watch everything I do?  
You won’t be able to tell me what to do then....”*

There are obvious pluses and minuses to this new-found independence.

- Past concerns about social groups often dissipate, and the class as a group frequently becomes more cohesive.
- Earlier social pressures may be replaced by the academic pressure related to the college application process.
- Our children take on more responsibility as they assume school-wide leadership roles as well as being viewed as role models for younger students.

The empowerment of being seniors may contribute to posturing at home and elsewhere.

- Keep in mind that these young adults are still impressionable.
- This may be your last chance to influence them with your family’s values and behaviors.
- Your role as parents may change to that of consultant and “sounding board” about your teens’ fears and concerns about departing from a familiar environment.

There is an ever-increasing awareness of their sexuality as some teens form couples or anticipate new relationships in college.

- Dating is both natural and developmentally appropriate. Such relationships are often an emotional outlet for sharing their thoughts and concerns.
- Romantic relationships also bring concerns about sexual experimentation. While JBS continues to provide information and programs about healthy choices pertaining to sex, nutrition, and use of controlled substances, the primary responsibility for such education still rests with the parents.

### The Social Scene

Parties may continue to be a major social focus for some teens, much as they are during the junior year.

- Parties during the senior year often include students from across the metro area and can be very large, often extending into the morning hours.
- Some teens may choose smaller group settings/activities in lieu of large parties.
- The availability of coed sleep-overs may once again bring parents in conflict with their seniors.
- Hotel parties, though rare, may occur and will require intervention on your part.
- Establish a curfew before your child leaves the house. Curfew of 12:00 a.m. for 12<sup>th</sup> graders is recommended in the Student-Parent Handbook and agreed to by eight private schools. According to the St. Louis County curfew ordinance, children under the age of 17 may not be outside the company of parents Sunday-Thursday 11:00 p.m. – 6:00 a.m. and on Friday and Saturday from 12:00 a.m. – 6:00 a.m.

(over)

#### Senior Year Perks

- Seniors are awarded use of the Senior Lounge and freedom to leave campus during lunch and free periods. You may want to encourage your child to enjoy these senior privileges, but to use their time during the school day wisely.
- College trips and trips associated with school activities (such as sports, language department trips, etc.) offer more opportunities for our seniors to test their independence.

#### Events

Spring break plans can be particularly divisive between parents and their teens and even between friends.

- There is no "Senior Trip," but many Burroughs' faculty do sponsor trips with academic or service components.
- Most seniors do not take an unchaperoned trip over spring vacation. Your family should come to your own decision about the best options and venue for your child. Parents might want to discuss possible spring break choices with their teens and other parents early in the school year before the pressure from teenagers intensifies.

JBS Family Network 2007-2008