

TEEN TALK (an original column from The Daily Record)

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Your letters are great! Keep 'em coming! And remember to put "TeenTalk" in the subject line of your emails! Write us a note right now (teentalk@the-daily-record-com). We're listening!

Dear Teen Talk,

Hi! I am 15 years old and I am having a little problem. I want to go on this one school trip, but I can only go if I get good grades. And I am not getting that good of grades! I'm afraid to tell my parents because they won't let me go and I *really* want to. Please help me! I am also having some problems at school, too. There's this girl who's being totally trashy with boys and doing stuff she shouldn't. But I don't want to be mean to her—what should I do? HELP, PLEASE!

- Anonymous

Dear Anonymous,

The grade problem is a tough one. If the school requires you to have good grades in order to go on the trip, there may not be anything you can do *this time*. (You *can* start getting those grades up so the next time there's something fun, you'll be first in line!) How to do it? That depends. Are your grades bad because you're just not trying? If that's the case, you already know what you need to do—so do it! But if you don't understand the material or it's just really difficult for you, it's time to talk with your teacher or parents. Let them know that you just can't cut it on your own. Ask about getting extra help from the teacher or a tutor. If the "good grades" rule is one your parents made, you're going to have to 'fess up to the bad grades—the sooner the better. (They're going to find out eventually anyway, right?) Then try to negotiate with them. Come up with a solid plan to bring your grades up as much as you can in the time you have left, perhaps by doing extra credit or acing an upcoming test. You'll really have to work your hardest, though, so your parents can see that you are truly trying.

As to your friend...sometimes the hardest thing to cope with is the fact that we can't change the way other people behave. You don't have to be mean to this girl, but you may have to accept that you can't change what she's doing. Try having a quiet talk with her when it's just the two of you. Let her know that you feel bad about way she's acting, but stick to talking about *your* feelings—don't accuse her or tell her that she's wrong or bad. (You don't like it when people do that to *you*, right?). If she isn't interested in changing, then all you can do is decide not to hang with her.