



OT's 7 Important Things to Know About T(w)eenage Boys*

By Kathy Peel, "America's Family Manager," for OT – the Shower Equipment for Guys

In addition to the Ten Expert Tips on personal grooming, here are seven other important things moms should keep in mind as their sons grow into manhood.

Development.

Young adolescence is a critical time in a boy's physical and emotional development. There are few other times in a human being's life when bodies go through such profound change. An adolescent's body is growing up and out, and his emotions are running rampant as he seeks to understand who he is and how he fits into the world. Showing unconditional love in tangible ways is important. Helping out with hygiene and grooming can be a tangible act of love. In a world where performance means everything, boys need to know that at home, the tryouts are over.

Self-Image and Self-Esteem.

How a boy thinks others see him influences his self image and self esteem. Although adolescent boys can be cruel in criticizing the way their friends look, a boy is often his own harshest critic. Mothers can help arm their sons to deflect negative comments, teasing or criticisms by helping them with basic hygiene and grooming. Something as simple as making sure your son doesn't smell bad after gym — or anytime — can make a huge difference. That's where products like OT, the shower equipment for guys, come into play.

Looking Good.

To the surprise of many moms, surveys show that adolescent boys are extremely concerned about their appearance. Even today's popular disheveled look is carefully coifed, gelled and pasted into well-planned place. T(w)een boys strive for that delicate balance of being noticed, but not being noticed too much.

Body Image.

The thoughts, feelings, and opinions we have about our physical selves — body image — are key components of every person's total self-image. But body image during adolescence occupies a much larger role than at any other time in his life. If a boy's body image is high, his overall self-esteem is high. If his body image is low, his self-esteem is more likely to be low.

Appearance and Learning.

Self-consciousness about body odor, hair, or other aspects of appearance can be distracting and uncomfortable. Experts say that boys can be so preoccupied with how they smell or whether their hair looks weird that they are unable to listen attentively in school. Feeling at ease with his body gives the teenager the peace of mind to pay closer attention in class. OT shower equipment for guys, can help give guys confidence that they look good.

Communication.

T(w)een boys are notoriously non-communicative, so trying to communicate about important issues such as good hygiene and grooming can prove frustrating for moms. It's important to keep a level head and ask specific questions that encourage dialogue. Instead of asking "How was your day?" ask "What was the hardest part of your day?" Instead of asking, "Is there anything you need for school?" ask "Do you need a new stick of deodorant for gym class?"

Independence.

Teens have a natural, healthy need for independence. The instinctual need to assert independence often supercedes even the best advice. Don't nag or even strongly advocate on matters of hygiene and grooming without expecting push back. Present the facts, offer the products, think creatively and enjoy the evolving person that is your teenage son.

* "OT's Seven Important Things" were developed with the cooperation of M.C. Culbertson, III, M.D., FAAP, FACEP Professor, Department of Pediatrics, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas and D'Arcy Lyness, Ph.D., Psychologist for KidsHealth.org, Nemours Foundation Wilmington, Delaware.