



The Five Basics of Parenting Adolescents

Adapted from "Raising Teens: A Synthesis of Research and a Foundation for Action"¹

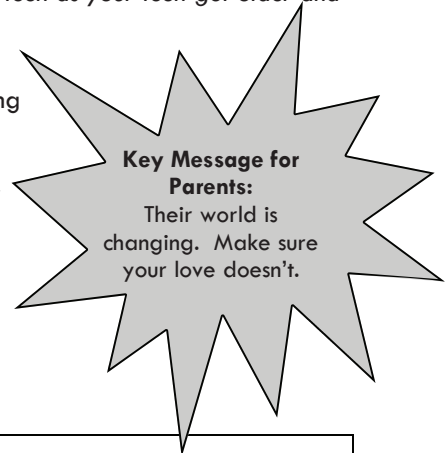


LOVE AND CONNECT

Teens need to have a connection with their parents. Support and accept your teen as your teen get older and more mature.

Strategies for Parents:

- Compliment and praise your teen when you see they have done something well.
- Acknowledge the good times.
- Your teen will challenge your point of view. Discuss your ideas with your teen. It's ok to have a difference in opinion.
- Spend time just listening to what your teen is feeling, experiencing, etc.
- Treat each teen as a unique individual.
- Appreciate and acknowledge your teen's interests, strengths, humor, etc.
- Provide meaningful roles for your teen in the family.
- Spend time together one on one and as a family.



Key Message for Parents:

Their world is changing. Make sure your love doesn't.

MONITOR AND OBSERVE

Teens need parents to know what is going on in their lives. Be aware of things like: how they are doing in school and what after-school activities they do. Let them know you are aware of their activities. Find out what is going on by talking, not by constantly watching your teen.

Strategies for Parents:

- Keep track of where your teen is and what they are involved in. Listen, observe and talk with other adults who know your teen.
- Keep in touch with the other adults in your teen's life. They will let you know how he is doing when you are not there. Ask to know the good and the bad.
- Involve yourself in school events.
- Stay on top of information about your teen's grades, job, etc.
- Learn and watch for warning signs of poor physical and mental health.
- Ask for advice if any warning signs worry you.
- Keep an eye on relationships your teen has in and outside of the home.
- Make sure that your teen challenges him or herself.



Key Message for Parents:

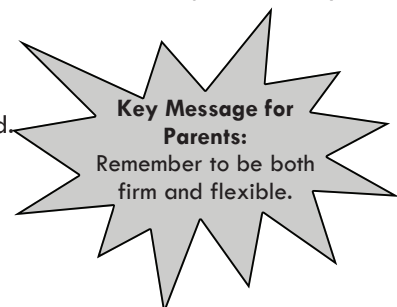
Keep an eye on your teen's activities. It matters more than ever.

GUIDE AND LIMIT

Teens need parents to have clear boundaries that can be subject to change. These limits should protect family rules and help your teen grow and mature.

Strategies for Parents

- Keep two kinds of "house rules." The rules around safety can't be argued. The rules around household tasks and schedules can be discussed.
- Make clear standards that are high and also realistic.
- Choose your battles and let go of smaller issues.
- Teach teens with discipline, don't use it for revenge.
- Punishing teens should not hurt their bodies or feelings.
- Give your teen both more duties and choices as they grow into adults.



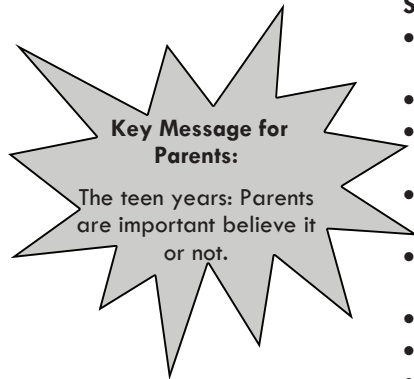
Key Message for Parents:

Remember to be both firm and flexible.



MODEL AND CONSULT

Teens need parents to help them make good choices and guide them while they grow older. Talk to your teen, support him or her and teach by example!



Strategies for Parents:

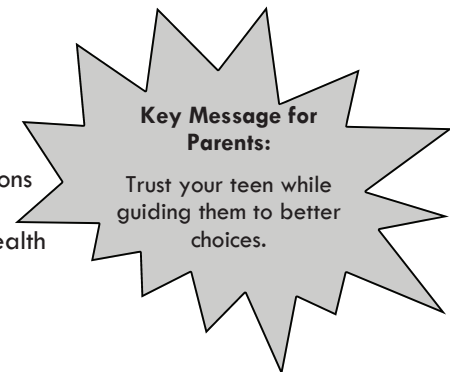
- Set a good example by behaving the way you want your teens to behave.
- Share your opinions with your teen.
- Model the kind of adult relationships that you would like your teen to have
- Give teens truthful answers when they ask questions. Keep in mind their maturity level.
- Take pride in your family customs. Share your family's history with your teen.
- Support teens' school habits and job training.
- Help teens get connected with their future plans.
- Give teens the chance to use their own reason and make decisions.

PROVIDE AND ADVOCATE

Teens need parents to give them healthy food, clothing, shelter and health care. They also need a caring home and loving adults in their lives.

Strategies for Parents

- Meet with people in your neighborhood, schools, and local groups.
- Choose the best schools and learning programs for your teen.
- Choose the safest neighborhood you can for your teen. Look into options for youth programs.
- Make sure your teen gets yearly health care check ups and mental health care.
- Find people and local groups that will help you be a better parent.



¹Simpson, A. Rae (2001). *Raising Teens: A Synthesis of Research and a Foundation for Action*. Boston: Center for Health Communication, Harvard School of Public Health.

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2005 Medi-Cal Adolescent QI Training resources. For more information, visit www.ahwg.net.



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Building Strong Bones: Why Calcium Counts

As you grow, you need calcium and other minerals and vitamin D to build strong bones and a healthy body.

Did you know?

- Most young people in the United States don't get enough calcium in their diets.
- Your body's need for calcium is at its highest point between the ages of 9 years and 18 years.
- If you don't get enough calcium when you're young, this can affect the strength of your bones later in life. So you need to take steps now to build strong bones.

What is calcium?

Calcium is a mineral that many parts of your body need. Its main job is to build strong bones and teeth, which contain 99% of your body's calcium. Calcium also helps your muscles move and helps control your blood pressure.

What if I don't get enough calcium?

If you don't get enough calcium, your bones will weaken. This is because your body will take calcium from your bones to meet its needs.

When you are young, your body can store calcium in your bones. As you age, you lose the ability to store calcium in your bones. By the time you reach young adulthood, your bones reach their peak bone density. That means your bones are as dense (or packed) with calcium as they will get—for life. Then your body mainly withdraws calcium from what is stored in your bones.

People who do not have enough calcium stored in their bones can get osteoporosis when they age. Osteoporosis is a disease that can make bones so fragile that they break from the stress of just bending over. People with osteoporosis may not know they have the disease until one or more bones fracture. By this time, it is usually too late to undo the damage to their bones.

Is calcium all I need for strong bones?

Calcium does not work alone. As you grow, your body also needs other minerals, such as phosphorus and magnesium, and vitamins, such as vitamins D and K. Physical activity is important too. Studies show that regularly doing weight-bearing activities such as walking, running, jumping, and playing tennis, basketball, or soccer helps you build strong bones. And if you do these activities outdoors, your body can make vitamin D when your skin is exposed to sunlight. (Remember to put on sunscreen.)

How much calcium do I need?

How much calcium your body needs varies by age. You need the most calcium between the ages of 9 years and 18 years. See "American Academy of Pediatrics Recommended Daily Intake of Calcium" chart.

American Academy of Pediatrics Recommended Daily Intake of Calcium

Age (years)	Calcium Need (mg per day)	Servings of Low-fat Dairy Products to Meet Need
4-8	800	3
9-18	1,300	4
19-50	1,000	3-4

How can I get calcium?

The best way to get the calcium that you need is by eating and drinking foods that naturally contain calcium. If you have a medical condition, talk with your doctor about the foods and beverages that would benefit you the most.

Sources of calcium include

- Low-fat milk, yogurt, and other dairy and soy beverage products.
- Flavored milks, such as chocolate and strawberry, have as much calcium as plain milk. Keep in mind that they may have more calories.
- Dark-green, leafy vegetables such as kale and turnip greens are low in calories and high in calcium. However, spinach is not a good source of calcium.
- Broccoli, tofu, chickpeas, lentils, split peas, and fish with bones, such as canned salmon and canned sardines. You can add these foods to salads.
- Calcium-fortified juices. Remember to limit yourself to 4 to 8 ounces (½-1 cup) of juice a day.
- Calcium-fortified cereals.

At the end of this publication are tables that list the specific amounts of calcium in foods.

How do I check calcium on food labels?

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requires that calcium be listed on Nutrition Facts labels. You may see amounts of calcium listed in the old or new format. The old format lists calcium as a percentage (Percent Daily Value). The new format lists calcium as a percentage and includes the milligrams (mg) per serving. For information about changes to the Nutrition Facts label, visit the FDA Web site at www.fda.gov/Food/LabelingNutrition/default.htm.

In general, a food that lists a daily value of 20% or more for calcium is high in calcium. Any food that contains less than 5% of the daily value is low in calcium. The calcium information on a Nutrition Facts label should be used only as a general guide about the amount of calcium in a food or beverage. It is based on a 2,000-calorie daily diet for an adult.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 2/3 cup (55g)
Servings Per Container About 8

Amount Per Serving

Calories 230 Calories from Fat 72

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 8g **12%**

Saturated Fat 1g **5%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 160mg **7%**

Total Carbohydrate 37g **12%**

Dietary Fiber 4g **16%**

Sugars 1g

Protein 3g

Vitamin A 10%

Vitamin C 8%

Calcium 20%

Iron 45%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.
Your daily value may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Nutrition Facts

8 servings per container
Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)

Amount per serving
Calories **230**

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 8g **10%**

Saturated Fat 1g **5%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 160mg **7%**

Total Carbohydrate 37g **13%**

Dietary Fiber 4g **14%**

Total Sugars 12g

Includes 10g Added Sugars **20%**

Protein 3g

Vitamin D 2mcg 10%

Calcium 260mg 20%

Iron 8mg 45%

Potassium 235mg 6%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Sample of an old Nutrition Facts label (top) and sample of a new Nutrition Facts label (bottom) created by the US Food and Drug Administration for illustrative purposes only.

Adapted from Nutrition Facts label programs and materials. US Food and Drug Administration Web site. <https://www.fda.gov/food/labelingnutrition/ucm20026097.htm>. Updated April 2, 2018. Accessed June 11, 2018.

What is lactose intolerance?

Some young people have significant lactose intolerance, which means they have trouble digesting lactose (the sugar in milk). In most people, lactose intolerance is of a mild form. These people can digest dairy products in small amounts with a meal. Cheeses and yogurts in which the lactose is partially broken down can provide good sources of calcium for them. There are preparations of the enzyme lactase that make lactose easier to digest. Also available is milk with reduced lactose. Nondairy beverages including soy milk that are rich in calcium, as well as calcium-fortified foods, can also be good choices for people who have lactose intolerance.

In some cases, your doctor may recommend a calcium supplement.

Do I need to take calcium and vitamin D supplements?

Certain medical conditions, diets, or lifestyle choices can make it hard for you to get enough calcium and vitamin D by eating the right foods. In some cases, your doctor may recommend a supplement, such as a daily dose of a calcium-containing antacid or another type of calcium supplement. You should not take more than a total of 1,000 mg of calcium supplements a day. Usually a supplement with 400 IU per day of vitamin D is enough. Check with your doctor to see what is best for you.

What decreases my calcium intake?

Here are some things that can hurt your bone health.

- **Drinking a lot of soda (pop or soft drinks)**—Studies show that this may make you more prone to bone fractures. This may be because sodas often take the place of milk or other calcium-rich drinks.
- **Certain diets**—Some diets may not provide enough calcium, such as a vegetarian diet that excludes dairy products. Before you start any diet, check with your doctor to make sure it includes enough calcium.
- **Alcohol and tobacco**—Alcohol and tobacco use can cause you to lose calcium from your bones.
- **Certain medicines and diseases**—Some medicines and kidney and intestinal diseases can cause you to lose calcium from your bones. Ask your doctor if any of the medicines you are taking affect your bones and what you can do to protect them.

Which foods have calcium?

The following table shows the amount of calcium in a variety of foods. The information is from the US Department of Agriculture. Calcium amounts may vary. Check nutrition labels on products for exact amounts.

Food Group	Serving Size	Calcium (mg)
Milk Group		
Milk, ^a regular or low-fat	1 cup	245–265
Yogurt, nonfat or fruit	1 cup	260
Cheese	1-ounce slice	200
Cheese, pasteurized	³ / ₄ -ounce slice	145
Ice cream	¹ / ₂ cup	90
Ice cream, soft serve	¹ / ₂ cup	115
Frozen yogurt	¹ / ₂ cup	105
Pudding, instant	¹ / ₂ cup	150
Soy milk, ^b calcium-fortified	1 cup	200–500
Protein Group		
Almonds, chopped	1 ounce	65
White beans, cooked or boiled	1 cup	160
Salmon, canned with bones	3 ounces	205
Tofu, firm or calcium-fortified	¹ / ₂ cup	205
Vegetables or Fruits		
Broccoli, cooked	1 cup	60
Collards, cooked	1 cup	265
Tomatoes, canned or stewed	1 cup	85
Orange juice, calcium-fortified	1 cup	300
Orange	1 medium	50
Grains		
English muffin, plain or enriched	1	95
Pancakes (made with milk)	1	80
Corn tortilla	1	45
Selected breakfast cereals, calcium-fortified	³ / ₄ –1 cup	100
Instant oatmeal (made with water), calcium-fortified	¹ / ₂ cup	65

From Your Doctor

^a Low-fat milk has as much or more calcium than whole milk.

^b If you drink nondairy beverages that contain calcium, keep in mind that some beverages labeled with the word *milk*, such as almond milk, are often low in calcium.

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Talking With Your Teen About Sex

Youths are exposed to sexual messages every day—on the TV, on the internet, in movies, in magazines, and in music. Sex in the media is so common that you might think teens today already know all they need to about sex. They may even claim to “know it all,” so sex is something you just don’t talk about. Unfortunately, only a small amount of what is seen in the media shows healthy sexual behavior or gives correct information.

Your teen needs a reliable, honest source to turn to for answers, and the best source is you. You may feel uneasy when talking with your teen about sex, but your guidance is important. Beyond the basic facts about sex, your teen needs to learn from you about your family values and beliefs. This needs to be an ongoing discussion and not just one “big talk.”

Here is information from the American Academy of Pediatrics to help you talk with your teen about this important and sensitive subject.

Why should I talk with my teen about sex?

You are the best person to teach your teen about sex, relationships, love, commitment, and respect, both through discussion and by your own example.

Parents often fear that if they talk about sex, their teen may want to try it. Teens are curious about sex, whether you talk with them about it or not. Studies show that teens whose parents talk openly about sex are actually more responsible in their sexual behavior.

Your guidance is important. It will help your teen make better-informed decisions about sex. Teens who don’t have the facts about sex and look to friends and the media for answers are the most likely to get into trouble, such as getting sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or becoming pregnant.

Talking about sex should begin when your children first ask questions like “Where do babies come from?” If you wait until your children are teens to talk about sex, they will probably learn their first lessons about sex from other sources. Studies show that children who learn about sex from friends or through a program at school, instead of their parents, are more likely to have sex before marriage. Teens who openly discuss sex with their parents are sexually active at a later age than those who don’t.

What should I tell my teen about sex?

Communication between parents and teens is very important. Your teen may not share the same values as you, but that possibility shouldn’t stop you from talking about sex and sexuality.

Before children reach their early teen years, they should know about

- Correct body names and functions of male and female sex organs
- Puberty and how the body changes (When and how the body changes is different for each child.)
- Menstruation (periods)
- Sexual intercourse and the risk of getting pregnant or getting an STI or virus, including HIV (the virus that causes AIDS)
- Your family values about dating, sexual activity, cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs

During the teen years, your talks about sex should focus more on the social and emotional aspects of sex and on your values. Be ready to answer questions like

- When can I start dating?
- When is it OK to kiss a boy or girl?
- How will I know when I’m ready to have sex?
- Is oral sex really sex?
- Won’t having sex help me keep my boyfriend or girlfriend?
- How do I say no?
- What do I do if someone tries to force me to have sex?

Answer your teen’s questions according to your values, even if you think your values are old-fashioned. If you feel strongly that sex before marriage is wrong, share this feeling with your teen and explain why you feel that way. If you explain the reasons for your beliefs, your teen is more likely to understand and adopt your values.

Other topics include

- **Peer pressure.** Teens face a lot of peer pressure to have sex. If they aren’t ready to have sex, they may feel left out. But about 50% of teens wait until after high school to have sex, and there are benefits of waiting. Abstinence from sex (oral, vaginal, and anal) provides 100% protection against getting STIs and becoming pregnant, and it provides less emotional stress if there’s a breakup.
- **Sex and STIs.** Teens need to know that having sex exposes them to the risk of getting STIs. The only sure way to prevent STIs is not to have sex. Common STIs include chlamydia, gonorrhea, human papillomavirus (HPV) infection, herpes, HIV/AIDS, and trichomoniasis. HPV is the main cause of anal, cervical, and penile cancer.
- **Reducing the risk of getting STIs.** Condoms (male or female) are the safest method to reduce the risk of getting most STIs and should always be used. Also, postponing sex until the later teen years or adulthood reduces the risk. If both partners are abstinent before marriage or are in a long-term, mature relationship; have never had an STI; and have sex only with each other, the risk is eliminated.
- **Monogamy.** Many teens have heard that monogamy is “safe sex”; however, they misunderstand and believe that having one partner and then switching and having another partner and then switching again is monogamy. Monogamy can mean having only one sexual partner at a time or only one sexual partner in a lifetime. Being in a sexual relationship with one person for a long time lowers the rate of infection, compared to being sexually active with more than one person or someone who changes partners after some time.
- **Birth control.** Teens need to know about birth control whether they decide to have sex or not. If your teen doesn’t know about birth control, an unplanned pregnancy might result. Teens are able to access birth control from a health care professional without parental permission in many states.

Teens also need to keep in mind that birth control pills, the birth control shot, contraceptive patches, rings, implants, and intrauterine devices prevent only pregnancy; they don’t protect against getting STIs, including HIV/AIDS. Condoms and another reliable birth control method need to be used each time to help reduce the risk of getting STIs and becoming pregnant.

- **Date rape.** Date (or acquaintance) rape is a serious problem for teens. It happens when a person your teen knows—for example, a date, friend, or neighbor—forces your teen to have sex. Make sure your teen understands that “no always means no.” Also, dating in groups, instead of alone, and avoiding drugs and alcohol reduce the risk of experiencing date rape.
- **Sexuality.** This is a difficult topic for many parents, but your teen probably has many questions about heterosexuality, homosexuality, and bisexuality. Many teens and young people go through a stage when they wonder, “Am I gay?” It often happens when a teen is attracted to a friend of the same sex or has a crush on a teacher of the same sex. This is common and doesn’t necessarily mean your teen is gay, lesbian, or bisexual. Sexual identity may not be firmly set until adulthood. If your teen is gay, lesbian, or bisexual, your love and acceptance is important.
- **Masturbation.** Masturbation is a topic few people feel comfortable with talking about. It’s a normal and healthy part of human sexuality and shouldn’t be discouraged. Discuss this in terms of your values. Talk with your pediatrician if your child can’t limit masturbation to a private place—for example, a bedroom or bathroom.

How do I talk with my teen about sex?

Sex is a very personal and private matter. Many parents find it difficult to talk with their children about sex. Teens may be too embarrassed, not trust their parents’ advice, or prefer not to talk with their parents about it. But sex is an important topic to talk about.

Here are tips that may help make talking with your teen easier.

- **Be prepared.** Read about the subject so that your own questions are answered before talking with your teen. Practice what you plan to say with your spouse or partner, a friend, or another parent. This step may make it easier to talk with your teen when the time comes. Speak calmly and clearly.

- **Be honest.** Let your teen know that talking about sex isn’t easy for you, but you think it’s important that information about sex comes from you. And even though you would prefer that your values be accepted, decisions about sex are ultimately up to your teen. If your teen disagrees with you or gets angry, take heart, you have been heard. These talks will help your teen develop a solid value system, even if it’s different from your own.
- **Listen.** Give your teen a chance to talk and ask questions. It’s important that you give your full attention.
- **Try to strike a balance.** While teens need privacy, they also need information and guidance from parents. If your teen doesn’t want to talk with you about sex and tells you that it’s none of your business, be firm and say that it is your business. Your teen should know that you’re asking out of love and concern, especially because sex can lead to potentially harmful situations. If your teen is quiet when you try to talk about sex, say what you have to say anyway. Your message may get through.
- **Ask for help.** If you just can’t talk with your teen about sex, ask your pediatrician; a trusted support such as a relative, schoolteacher, counselor, or nurse; or a religious leader such as a minister, priest, or rabbi for help. Also, many parents find it useful to give their teens a book on human sexuality and say, “Take a look at this, and let’s talk.”

Visit HealthyChildren.org for more information.

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Physical Activity: Creating a FITT Plan

Physical activity is important for everyone in the family. Here is information from the American Academy of Pediatrics summarizing the FITT method and includes general fitness tips and an activity log.

FITT Method

FITT (frequency, intensity, time, and type) is one way to remember the general guidelines for what should be included in a fitness plan. Remember, it's important to keep in mind that each family member's fitness goals will be different based on age, sex, current fitness level, and available resources. Talk with your doctor if you have any questions.

Frequency—Do some type of physical activity every day.

Intensity—Choose an activity that is at least moderate in intensity, and also try to add a few more vigorous activities over the week. Vigorous activity is activity that makes you breathe hard and sweat. (Reaching a certain heart rate is not necessary.)

Examples of Moderate Activity	Examples of Vigorous Activity
Slow walking (3.5 mph)	Fast walking (4.5 mph)
Slow bike riding (<10 mph)	Fast bike riding (>10 mph)
Dancing	Jogging or running
Weight lifting—light workout	Aerobics
Stretching	Competitive sports: basketball, football, soccer

Time (duration)—Plan on a total time of at least 60 minutes of activity each day. This can be done all at once or added together over several shorter 10- to 15-minute blocks of activity. Breaking it up into smaller

blocks of time is a great way to start a new program or fit activity into a busy schedule.

Type—The type of activity can include a variety of team sports, individual sports, recreational activities, family activities, active hobbies, and walking or bicycling for fun and transportation. Several times every week do weight-bearing activities that promote muscle strength, flexibility, and bone health. The most important thing is to choose something fun!

Tips for Parents

Make time to be active. School-aged youth should participate every day in 60 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous physical activity that is right for their age, enjoyable, and involves a variety of activities.

Limit sedentary activities. These are activities where you're sitting down a lot, like watching TV, using a cell phone or computer, or playing video games. Visit HealthyChildren.org/MediaUsePlan for tips on how to balance your time.

Keep an activity log. The use of activity logs can help children and teens keep track of their exercise programs and physical activity.

Focus on the positive. Praising participation over winning and encouraging positive behaviors are important, especially if a child is less active and not as interested in sports.

Be a role model. Parents are powerful role models and can help shape a child's perception of exercise.

Keep an activity log. Children and teens can be motivated to exercise more when they keep an activity log. Logs can also be used by parents and health care professionals to make recommendations for changes or to offer incentives to encourage their children to be physically active.

Activity Log

Type of Activity	Sunday Minutes	Monday Minutes	Tuesday Minutes	Wednesday Minutes	Thursday Minutes	Friday Minutes	Saturday Minutes
Total Time							

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