

## INTRODUCTION

As summer begins, you are probably excited like many parents. School is finally over. You get a break from the endless activities revolving around school—waking teens up, making sure they don't miss the school bus and that they are appropriately dressed. Are your teens turning in their homework? Are projects being completed on time? You are relaxed. You finally get a break from the sheer magic of juggling your professional life and keeping up with the endless list of school assignments and after school activities.

After you heave a sigh of relief and settle into the summer, your reprieve is soon replaced by anxiety. You wonder how you will keep your teens out of trouble during the seemingly endless summer! This booklet gives you realistic suggestions to use now from people who know.

**Marian Pobe, M.D.** is a pediatrician with numerous teens in her care. She realized that her teens were very comfortable sharing with her information they could not share with their parents. She also realized that while mothers spend time nurturing their toddlers and younger children, their teenagers were basically left to grow on their own, making their own choices because of the communication breakdown.

**Awo Amarin**, currently working with children, practiced as an architect for several years abroad. Having previously had the opportunity to interact with teenagers from all over the world as an exchange student, in St. Louis, Missouri, Awo Amarin experienced first hand, the countless challenges that face teens and their families, regardless of geographical location. Always willing to lend a listening ear or offer a shoulder for comfort, her advice has often been solicited by both teens and their parents.



## IN YOUR NECK OF THE WOODS AND BEYOND

**1 Find out about summer activities in your area.** These are organized through your area Y.M.C.A., recreational centers, neighborhood country clubs, various religious and spiritual groups, and local boys and girls clubs. Doing an online Google search for summer activities for teens gives you many choices.

**2 Organize day camps at the park and involve other families if you are not interested in camps or have more free-spirited teens.** Have wholesome sports competitions like tug of war or swimming competitions between the teens or between families. Have parents share the supervising duties. This frees up the parents too, who can then have “date time” with their partner.

**3 Discover the hidden gems in your neck of the woods.** Visit historical sites, museums, arboretums, aquariums, your local zoo, and other tourist attractions like the national parks. Some of these places are even free.

**4 Organize trips to area lakes and beaches or swimming pools in your neighborhood.** This is great for the whole family. Be sure teens have adult supervision on fishing trips and beach trips. This minimizes the risk of one person bringing alcohol and getting others to drink. What starts as fun can sometimes lead to disastrous consequences.

**5 Exercise with your teens.** This motivates the whole family. You may be the next family on a television morning talk show, proudly showing the world what you have achieved and all the pounds you have lost together.

**6 Arrange outdoor activities like volleyball, basketball, soccer, if possible and include your teen's friends.** Not only will the other parents appreciate it, you will be around the people your teen hangs out with.