



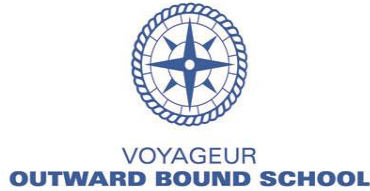
VOYAGEUR  
**OUTWARD BOUND SCHOOL**

# **Intercept**

# **Semester**

## Parent Workbook

*50-Day Course*



Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the Intercept Program and the Voyageur Outward Bound School (VOBS) and community. By now your child has begun what will prove to be one of the most demanding and rewarding experiences of their life. Thank you for choosing the Intercept Program for your family. Family involvement is what makes Intercept both unique and successful. Intercept requires a significant commitment from both you and your child, and we are excited and honored to begin this journey with you.

Throughout this workbook and our literature, we will refer to you as *parent* and to your teen or young adult as *child* for simplicity. However, we recognize that every family is different, that our students are a variety of different ages, and that many relationships between an adult and a teen or young adult are parental in nature. The one thing that all of your children have in common, and that sets them apart from so many others, is that they have adults in their lives who love and support them. That alone is something to celebrate.

While your child travels through the wilderness with a group of peers over the coming weeks our staff will challenge them to reflect on the events that led to their involvement in Intercept and to begin planning for the future. Although you will not be sleeping under the stars, cooking over a fire, or traveling across a wilderness landscape each day, you are an equal and integral part of this process. This workbook is intended to give you a parallel experience and to challenge you with some of the same questions your child will be reflecting on. Your child knows you will be tackling this workbook while they are facing the unique challenges of wilderness travel and community living. That knowledge will become a powerful part of their experience because it sends a clear message that *we are in this together*. Just as they are learning to become part of a successful expeditionary team, they are considering how to be a more active member of a successful and healthy family. **Intercept is a family program, and your participation in this workbook, in conversations with your Course Director, and in the Family Seminar are critical to the program's success.** Semester courses include two conferences, one via phone midway and one in-person at the end.

**The workbook:** Begin your workbook today! **Every parent attending the seminar is required to complete the workbook**, and we encourage every adult living with your child to complete it regardless of attendance. It is designed to be used daily and is not intended to be rushed through in the days leading up to the Family Seminar. Working through it day by day will facilitate a more rewarding experience, and likely, a better outcome for you *and* your family. The questions are for you and will never be seen by your child. We will, however, collect your workbooks prior to the first day of the Seminar. This simply accelerates the process of our instructional staff getting to know you. They have weeks to get to know your child and only a short weekend to connect with you.

**The letters:** In the Week 3 and Week 7 sections of the workbook you will find instructions for writing letters to your child. Semester courses require two letters—one at the midway point and one before the Family Seminar. **These letters will be emailed to your Course Director and delivered to your child.** Each parent involved in your child's life is encouraged to write letters and those attending the seminar are required to write them. Please set aside ample time to craft this letter. Your child will be doing the same. These letters are a chance to communicate with each other about what you've learned during your unique Outward Bound experiences. They provide an opportunity to set the stage for a positive experience and exchange during the family conference.

Thanks again for your commitment to this process and to your family. We cannot wait to see you in a few weeks! Between now and then, please let us know if we can support you in any way.

Sincerely,  
The Voyageur Outward Bound Intercept Team

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## Understanding Outward Bound—Educational Framework

Outward Bound’s expeditionary learning approach is an educational framework that emphasizes high achievement through active learning, character development and teamwork – across diverse learning environments. Outward Bound’s approach to teaching and learning is rooted in the classroom. It is a methodology that places equal emphasis on development of character and intellect. Outward Bound’s expeditionary learning can occur nearly anywhere, with nearly anyone – in the classroom, on a grueling mountain ascent, in the post-course debrief, or throughout the days returning from the wild.

The positive outcomes our students experience — whether they are middle and high school age, college age or adults — can be seen in the consistently high level of enthusiasm upon completion of an expedition. Strangers become life-long friends. Small accomplishments on a course become life-long habits. Through shared challenges, adversity, failure, and success, students discover and develop new skills, confidence, and passion. What sets an Outward Bound expedition apart from any other learning experience is the emphasis that expedition members are “crew, not passengers.” We don’t *encourage* students to contribute to the group – we *require* it. After all, on an Outward Bound expedition, awareness of others is not *optional* – it is *necessary* for success. The idea that “they are needed,” no matter who they are, is a critical ingredient to the success of Outward Bound programs.

**VALUES.** *We teach and work by these values:*

### **Compassion**

- Demonstrating concern and acting with a spirit of respect and generosity in service to others

### **Integrity**

- Acting with honesty, being accountable for one’s decisions and actions

### **Excellence**

- Being one’s best self, pursuing craftsmanship in one’s actions, and living a healthy and balanced life

### **Inclusion and Diversity**

- Valuing and working to create communities representative of our society that support and respect differences

**PRINCIPLES.** *We use these principles to design and deliver programs:*

### **Learning Through Experience**

- Facilitating engaging, relevant sequential experiences that promote skill mastery and incorporate reflection and transference
- Learning from success as well as failure

### **Challenge and Adventure**

- Using unfamiliar settings to impel students into mentally, emotionally and physically demanding experiences
- Utilizing and managing appropriate risk

### **Supportive Environment**

- Designing an experience that supports physical and emotional safety
- Developing a caring and positive group culture

**OUTCOMES.** *We measure learning and success by these common objectives:*

### **Character Development**

- Demonstrating increased self-confidence and self-actualization
- Demonstrating compassion toward others and living a healthy and balanced life

### **Leadership**

- Demonstrating the ability to set goals as well as inspire and guide others to achieve them
- Demonstrating the ability to collaborate, communicate, solve problems and resolve conflicts effectively

### **Service**

- Demonstrating social and environmental responsibility
- Actively engaging in service to others

## Understanding Outward Bound—A Brief History

In 1934, a progressive educator by the name of Kurt Hahn first applied principles of a curriculum that placed equal emphasis on development of character, leadership, a sense of service, and academic studies within the classrooms of the Gordonstoun School in Scotland.

As war broke out in Europe in 1939, Lawrence Holt – a business partner in a large merchant-shipping enterprise - insisted that faulty training was the cause of many seamen’s unnecessary deaths in the Battle of the Atlantic. “I would rather,” he told Hahn, “entrust the lowering of a life-boat in mid-Atlantic to a sail-trained octogenarian than to a young sea technician who is competently trained in the modern way but has never been sprayed by salt water.” At this, Hahn proposed starting a new kind of school in Aberdovey, Wales: a one-month course that would foster “physical fitness, enterprise, tenacity and compassion among British youth.” The school was called Outward Bound.

The training at Aberdovey was “less training for the sea than through the sea.” The distinction - training *through* rather than *for* - is at the essence of the Outward Bound dynamic. The sea, mountains and desert provide training that no institute or university can offer. These landscapes, in tandem with Outward Bound principles, teach the hard, technical skills necessary for survival, and also teach the relevant skills necessary for life. Since 1941, Outward Bound has evolved though never departed from Hahn’s original concept – an intense experience surmounting challenges in a natural setting through which the individual builds their sense of self-worth, the group comes to a heightened awareness of human interdependence, and all grow in concern for those in danger and need.

## Understanding Outward Bound—Outward Bound Today

Today, more than ever, young people face a modern reality that is complex, uncertain, frenetic, and, at times, incomprehensible. Such is life. 75 years ago, our founder’s goal was to get students outside of the classroom integrating intensive experience and skill-building into the fabric of education.

Although today’s Outward Bound expeditions have adapted to the needs of our modern society, our programs are still built upon Hahn’s central philosophy: to prepare students of all ages and circumstances with the strength of character and determination they need to thrive – in the classroom, in the workplace, in the family and in the world. Outward Bound’s national network of regional schools creates learning expeditions true to our core values. We design every course around a powerful, proven educational framework. And we remain unwavering in our commitment to deliver concrete learning outcomes – for every student - at every school - every time.

Welcome to Outward Bound. And the rest of this expedition called “life.”

## Understanding Outward Bound—Mission Statement

The courses are very difficult. However, our mission is simple....  
*Changing lives through challenge and discovery.*

## Understanding Intercept—Outward Bound for Struggling Teens and Young Adults

The Intercept program began in 1980, like all Outward Bound expeditions, Intercept courses are deliberately designed to provide high levels of physical and emotional challenge for students. They learn how to overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles and discover that they can achieve more than they ever believed possible. The Intercept Program at VOBS provides experiences specifically designed for struggling youth and their families. Students are given time to examine the decisions they have made in their lives and granted concrete opportunities to practice new ways of decision making, goal setting, and connecting decisions with consequences.

Throughout the experience VOBS staff work closely with students to impart the skills necessary to face challenges and mentor them through the process of self-discovery. As the course progresses, VOBS instructors also guide the students in transferring their newfound skills to their lives back home. The focus on community and interpersonal relationships allows students to better connect their Outward Bound experience with their behaviors at home, school, and in society. Through lessons in leadership, communication, conflict-resolution, and judgment, students are empowered with the skills necessary to start on a new path when they return home.

Intercept Semester courses begin with a 25-day wilderness expedition followed by a Transition Phase – a carefully designed 6-day curriculum aimed to prepare students to reunite over the phone with their families, revisit their goals for the course, and prepare for the second half of their expedition. The 6-day curriculum includes two days of volunteer work, preparation for the second expedition, and most importantly a facilitated phone conversation between the students and their families. The students then embark on a second expedition to further deepen their learning and practice the new skills they gained during the first half of the course. The second Transition Phase includes volunteer work and time to prepare to reunite with their families, reengage in their home lives in a meaningful way, and transfer their successes at VOBS to the challenges they will face in the future. The Family Seminar culminates with a facilitated conversation between the students and their families. This conversation provides a chance to make a plan for the student's return and to share their commitment to growth and goals for the future.

Your teen or young adult's Outward Bound experience began the moment they left home. Their course and its lessons will continue to grow well beyond the 50 days they spend in the wilderness. Your Outward Bound experience started that same day as well. You are a crucial part of your child's experience. You are the link that can help transfer learnings and new perspectives gained through the Intercept program to your home. Completing this workbook is the first step in making your Outward Bound experience, as well as your child's, as effective and rich as it can be.

## Understanding Intercept—Curriculum

Our instructors work with their students to master the technical skills required for daily life on expedition. On any given day, this could include navigation skills, fire building, knot tying, and travel skills whether that be paddle strokes in a tandem canoe or orienting a map. These are the hard skills required for life on the trail. The instructors also spend time every day helping the students master the interpersonal skills they will need to find success on expedition and how to transfer these skills to life at home. Many of the most powerful lessons of your child's Intercept course are learned through community living. On the following pages, you will find examples of some of the lessons and principles that our Intercept instructors might impart to students during the expedition.

## Circles of Responsibility—Fundamental Lesson

The three concentric circles symbolize the relationship between freedom and responsibility. As you begin to demonstrate that you have the skills to successfully take on more responsibility, trust is gained. This trust allows you to earn freedom. In this way, freedom and responsibility are kept in balance. In short, the more proficiency you demonstrate the more autonomy you receive. Likewise, the more autonomy you have, the more responsibility you must take on. This is the central concept around which your son/daughter's Voyageur Outward Bound course is based.

On the expedition the more responsibility individuals and the group are able to shoulder, the more freedom they are given. However, if this freedom is abused, or individuals or the group are unable to continuously uphold their responsibilities, the freedom is taken from them. They must regain trust before regaining those freedoms. This progression is designed to mirror the progression in life from infancy to adulthood. Only by progressing through the phases of the course (Training, Main, Mastery, and Final) can participants graduate from the program.

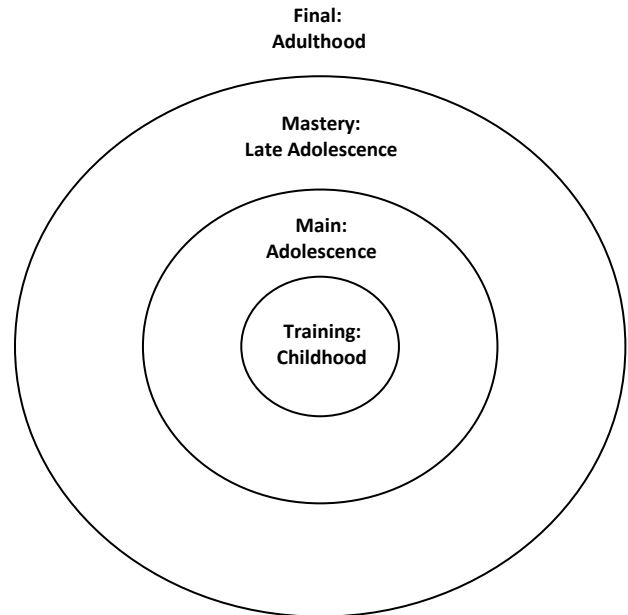
**Childhood (Training):** Nearly everything is done for you or with an instructor walking you through the steps. There is minimal freedom or responsibility while you are in Training, just as when you are a small child. This is the time to acquire the necessary skills for success later on. You are being taken care of completely, however you have no freedom to take care of yourself or make your own decisions.

**Adolescence (Main):** You still have a close support system and much is still done for you. However, you have more responsibility and freedom than you did previously. Although you still seek much freedom, you have not yet fully demonstrated the responsibility necessary to earn it. If you abuse this new-gained freedom or fail to follow through with responsibilities, you will be sent back to Training (i.e. being grounded or put on probation).

**Late Adolescence (Mastery):** or Young-Adulthood. The role of the adults (instructors or parents) becomes more of a mentor. This phase accurately reflects life at home for most Semester students. It is a nebulous time in a young adult's life when they have many of the responsibilities, and hence freedoms, of adulthood, but they have not yet gained the skills to be successful in the new role. They have the opportunity to make more personal choices and to feel more of their own successes and failures.

**Adulthood (Final):** There are still laws and regulations, but within that system, you are able to make you own decisions and take care of yourself. With the responsibility of taking care of yourself comes as much freedom as society allows. Again, if you cannot handle this responsibility, or you have so much freedom that you begin using it to make poor choices, you could end up back in Mastery, Main, or worse, Training (i.e. jail).

On a Voyageur Outward Bound course the lines between childhood, adolescence, late-adolescence, and adulthood are very clear. The purpose is to set very clear expectations (and consequences) and to break the course into manageable chunks. This makes tasks seem less daunting, and allows student to measure their success along the way. In life they are more blurred.





# Voyageur Outward Bound School Intercept Program Parent Workbook

## General Guidelines

1. Work on the questions daily – do not wait until the days prior to the Seminar.
2. Be honest. The workbook is for you and will not be seen by your child.
3. Remember, the success of this program depends of the involvement of everyone. This workbook is the first step in *your* Outward Bound course.
4. Weeks 3 and 7 require a greater time commitment than the other Weeks. Plan accordingly and work ahead if you will be busy in the weeks prior to the Phone Conference and Seminar.
5. It is important that you complete the following prior to the first day of the Seminar:
  - Workbook:** Please complete, scan, and email this to the Course Director.
  - Letter to your child:** You will find guidelines for crafting this letter in the Week 3 and Week 7 sections of the workbook.
  - Narrative Request Form:** Instructors write a narrative account of your child's Outward Bound course. This document can be provided to parents, schools, bosses, probation officers, etc., and kept as a record of their progress. Please fill out this form before the end of the course. We will send you a link in an email during the final week.

## Week One (Days 1 - 6)

As you read this your child is beginning their wilderness expedition. The first night your child and their teammates will sleep under a tent or tarp, eat a meal cooked over a fire or camp stove, practice rescue drills, inventory their gear, and begin getting to know their peers. Your child may be scared or excited or more likely, a little bit of both. Perhaps they know they are ready to change and that there is something to gain from this experience. Or perhaps they are feeling angry about being away from home and has yet to see what might be learned from this experience.

Regardless of the vast array of emotions your child may be experiencing, the first week will be engaging. All students are immersing themselves in a totally new way of life with a new group of people. Every day they are waking up and moving their “homes.” They are waking up with the sun and traveling all day to make it to the next destination before sunset. These distance goals demand the participation of each individual within the group. Every member of the team is integral. Although they may not recognize this on day one, it will become an undeniable fact as the days go on. They will quickly discover a key life lesson – *we need each other*.

This first week is heavily focused on skills acquisition. The instructors work hard to impart the knowledge that students need in order to adapt to their new environment, travel across the landscape, and to become a contributing member of an expeditionary team. Having to learn these skills can be frustrating. However, as they begin mastering them frustration slowly gives way to a feeling of accomplishment, and each student will begin to discover things they are good at and how they contribute.

This week also focuses on getting to know one another and beginning to talk about how they want to live together in their small community. With their instructors' guidance, the group begins to form their own culture, set of norms, and expectations for one another. By the end of the week, each student will also work with their instructors to craft an Action Plan, or a list of personal goals to work towards throughout their Outward Bound course. Over time, instructors guide your child to craft goals that are applicable to changes they want to make at home. Those conversations will come in the following days and weeks. But for now, the focus is on beginning this new adventure. The questions below are intended to guide your reflections on the beginning of this new chapter:





5. Describe some of the events that led to your family's involvement in Intercept.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Describe your child's development toward adolescence. Were there any significant events that may have contributed to the difficulties they now face? What role did you play in their development positively? What role do you feel like you played in contributing to the difficulties?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. So much of this program is focused on change. However, for a minute consider: what do you like best about your child? What do you hope never changes about them?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Do you see any of yourself in your child? Please comment on both positive and negative traits.

9. What was it like for you to begin the new adventure of parenthood with your child? What are your favorite memories of their childhood?

10. If it were possible, is there anything that you would like to communicate to your child right now as they become immersed in this new experience?

## **Week Two (Days 7 - 14)**

By now your child has learned the basics of wilderness travel. They know how to stay safe and healthy in a very rugged environment, navigate with a map, cook dinner outdoors, and make water safe to drink.

During the second week of the expedition, instructors are beginning to offer the group more responsibility and with it, more freedom. With this notable change in the instructors' role and more pressure on the group to be increasingly independent, most groups will find that communication becomes increasingly challenging and friction among group members often rises. Perhaps the tedium of traveling every day has also set in. Perhaps they are sick and tired of packing up their belongings each morning. Maybe they are getting frustrated with carrying heavy loads over difficult terrain or for caring for themselves and their teammates.

On the other hand, maybe they are starting to recognize that they have something to gain from this experience. Maybe they are truly beginning to appreciate the serenity found in the wilderness and the camaraderie of their team. At this point the responsibility for self and team is palpable. There is a sense of accomplishment when the group makes it to their destination and can settle into the nightly routine. If they do not make their miles, they might find themselves frustrated at the thought of having to do more the following day. These ups and downs are what make the wilderness expedition and community living such a powerful learning experience.

The emotional rigors of the course often come to the foreground during this week. Your child is not only missing the creature comforts of home, but you as well. Now that the students know each other a little better and know what it takes to live in the wilderness, it is time to begin addressing the reasons why they are here. This week the instructors begin having more focused conversations about how lessons they are learning at Outward Bound may apply to home. Decision making, conflict resolution, taking responsibility for one's actions, and goal setting are all topics covered this week as the group continues to travel, learn more skills, and learn how to live together.

The following questions challenge you to consider communication in your family and how it affects the relationships within the family. These questions parallel similar quandaries that your child has been experiencing and thinking about this week.

### **Communication & Conflict**

1. What does it mean to listen? What is the difference between listening and giving advice? Which do you do most often with your child?
  
2. How good of a listener are you for your child? Are they comfortable sharing their difficulties or feelings with you? Would you change anything about how you listen?



## Rules for Fair Fighting—Fundamental Lesson

From the list below, consider which behaviors from the *fair* column and which from the *unfair* column are your “default” behaviors.

Fair	Unfair
Speak one at a time and allow equal time	Name Calling
Look for a compromise	Opening old wounds – dredging up the past
Try not to generalize, be specific	Getting off on tangents and avoiding the topic
Allow for time-outs	Intimidation, threats of violence
Observe the rules you set and expect	Changing the rules without telling
No force. No hitting. No threats.	Expecting there to be a winner – Not compromising
Show respect	Saving up gripes to dump all at once
Be honest with yourself	Thinking you can read the other’s mind
Give reasons for your actions	Denying the facts
Admit when you are wrong	Gloating over a “victory”
Make your agreements clear by repeating them and writing them down	Pretending to ignore the other

7. What happens to your communication skills when you are angry? How does your child communicate when s/he is angry?

8. Does your child *know how* to make you mad? If no, describe *how they do* make you mad? If yes, how might you be able to *respond* differently? In other words, what ways can you manage your emotional reactivity that is not conditional upon your child's behavior? (Example of conditional: "I won't blow up if my kid doesn't provoke me.")
9. What steps have you taken, or are you willing to take, to improve communication or to disagree in a healthier way with your child?
10. What steps would you like your child to take?
11. Have you ever apologized to your child? What makes this difficult at times?



## Week Three (Days 15 - 20)

During this week, your daughter or son is completing their Solo experience. (*Semester note:* Semester courses will have a second Solo experience during the next expedition). Although the instructors are not far away, each student is at their own campsite. It is a unique opportunity to spend time alone reflecting on the expedition as well as life at home. The Solo experience is deliberately placed in the third week for several reasons. First, it is an essential break from the rigors of expeditionary life. Students can catch up on rest and rejuvenate before the final push back to base camp. Also, it gives students a break from their peers with whom they have spent all day, every day up until this point. Just like any family-like environment, taking some space from one another helps the success of the team in the long run. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, this Solo experience gives your child time for *introspection*. It provides an opportunity for self-discovery through deliberate reflection. It also allows them to begin mentally preparing for life after Outward Bound.

During Solo instructors give each student a variety of assignments to guide reflection about family dynamics, the role they play in it, and the role they wish to play. The assignments, combined with guided conversations, help students think about changes they may want to make upon returning home and help prepare for reuniting with you. As part of this preparation they will write a letter to you sharing some of what they are reflecting on. (*Please note:* you are asked to write a letter to them as well in the following section of the workbook.)

During this week, students will also work on revising their Action Plans and crafting goals that are more applicable to the last phase of their course and also to life at home. They may be thinking about the added responsibility that waits for them as their group gains more responsibility and freedom. When your child finishes their Solo experience, the group will continue the expedition. This week comes with increased levels of independence accompanied by an increase in responsibility. At this point, students have developed the skills they need to rise to the challenge. The result is that during this period students learn that mistakes are not the end of the world. Rather, mistakes serve as a learning opportunity and a chance to make positive changes.

The questions below are similar to questions asked of your child during Solo, as well as thoughts they will be considering as they and their teammates are faced with the real challenges of the next part (or for semester students, Mastery Phase) of expedition. During this week instructors work with students to help make connections between what makes a successful expeditionary team and what makes a successful family team.

### **Family Systems & Working as a Team**

1. How do people learn to accept responsibility? How did you learn to accept responsibility?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What traits and skills do you believe are necessary to become a capable adult? Which of these traits did your child demonstrate before their course?

3. In what ways do you feel that you've been a role model for your child? In what ways might your child say that you've been a role model to them?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. How well do you think your family system works?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What role(s) do you play in your family? What role would you like to play?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Do you feel supported by your child? Do you lend support to your child? How?

7. Do you think your child knows you? Are there parts of your life story that you want to share with them?

8. Do you think you know your child? Are there parts of their life story you'd like to know more about?

9. What do think your child wants to see change in your relationship? What do you think they find most frustrating in your relationship? What do you find most frustrating?

10. What are *you* willing to do to make your relationship better with your child?

## Instructions for Writing the Letter

Parents of semester students will send their first letter to their Course Director via email. Your Course Director will send you an email with the specific date this letter is needed. Your child will receive your letter before your midway point phone conference. You will receive a letter from your child before your conference as well.

The Intercept Program is a chance for you as a parent to have some time away from your child, to examine your family situation, and to do some personal reflection on what you can offer the relationship when your child returns home. To help your process, we ask that you use this outline to write a letter to your child. We will also provide the letter written to you by your child. **Each parent should write a separate letter.** Use the questions below as a guideline for the letter. Your child was given a similar framework to write a letter to you. The questions are meant to guide you, not limit you. Answer them in any order you wish. The letter is intended to be meaningful, but not formal. Your child will be reading your letter the night before you reunite. Consider what you want to communicate in order to set the tone for the following day.

It is okay, and even appropriate, to touch on some of the reasons your child is involved in the Intercept program. There were challenges leading up to this point and we cannot pretend that those challenges are not present. Be honest. Be direct. However, if this is the sole focus of the letter your child may not be very receptive during the family conference. **Therefore, it is very important to be positive and remain future-oriented rather than focusing only on your child's past behaviors.** Also, do your best to balance an appreciation for who they are without over-emphasizing who you would like them to be. This letter aims to set the tone for your phone conversation with your child. It also will give your child time to process some of the important, and potentially challenging, things you need to say to them while they are still with us.

A final note: **do not include any huge surprises** (i.e. a tragedy, a divorce, etc.). This can greatly distract from your child's ability to be present during their conversations with you. If there have been big family changes that occurred while your child was with us, please contact your Course Director. They will work with you to make a plan for how and when to communicate this to your child. Likewise, contact your Course Director with any other questions or concerns regarding this letter writing process.

### Questions to address when crafting the letter to your child:

- What are some of your fondest memories of time spent with your child, recent or older?
- What do you appreciate about your child? Please include both actions and qualities about their essence or character.
- What do you feel are your strengths as a parent? What are your strengths outside of your role as a parent? What do you feel are areas for improvement?
- What about how your child interacts with you and your family would you like to see change? How have those interactions affected you in the past?
- What about how you interact with your child would you like to see change? This is an opportunity to take some responsibility for your role in the relationship, both as a parent and as a person. What are you willing to change or offer that you have not tried before? Is there anything you can do to repair the harm you have caused in the relationship?
- What do they need to take responsibility for? Is there anything they can do to repair some of the harm that they have caused? This can include stating your expectations as well as areas of potential compromise. Please limit yourself to no more than the three major issues. It is helpful to mention the positive contributions this could have to your relationship and the family.
- Close the letter with positive remarks – How are you feeling about hearing your child's voice on the phone? What have you missed about them over the past weeks? What are your hopes for the second half of the course?

## Week Four (Days 21 - 27)

*Complete before your phone conference.*

Congratulations! Your child and their team have completed their first wilderness expedition. This is a huge accomplishment!! Your child knows that there is still a lot of work to do and that the course is not complete. However, right now the group is pausing to celebrate their accomplishments thus far. Please take a minute to do the same. You should feel very proud of your child for completing this portion of their Outward Bound course. Completion of a wilderness expedition is something very few people have achieved, and it is no small feat.

This week is referred to as the Transition Phase. This period of the course is designed to transition from being fully focused on life in the wilderness with a group to thinking about life back at home, how the lessons learned during the expedition transfer to home, and to enjoy a little respite before heading out on the second expedition. During the Transition Phase the group will be doing a variety of activities. This includes two full days of community service where students are asked to contribute to causes outside of themselves and their group. These projects allow students to begin practicing some of the interpersonal, leadership, communication, and goal-setting skills that they learned throughout their wilderness expedition in a meaningful way. Your child will also be working closely with the instructors to finish preparing for the phone conference.

The Family Conference is perhaps the most pivotal point in a student's Intercept course for two reasons. First, it is a significant step towards transferring lessons and skills learned from Outward Bound back to life at home. Secondly, being honest and open during this conference is one of the most real challenges in a student's Intercept course. The conference will be facilitated by one of your son or daughter's instructors. Every student and every family are different, and therefore, these conversations will vary from family to family. Our job is to facilitate a conversation that allows everyone's perspectives to be voiced and help you move forward with your relationships and your family.

## Expectations and Incentives

*Completing the Expectations and Incentives section of the workbook is a part of your **assignments for Week 7**. Please flip forward to this section and read through the assignments **BEFORE** your phone conference. The information will be useful to think about as you approach that conversation. However, you do **NOT** need to complete the assignments now. Rather, continue to week 5. Return to this section during Week 7 and complete before the Family Seminar.*

Please consider the following points as we get closer to conference day and before answering the questions below:

- The conference aims to be a starting point and a jumping off place to the future. It will not be a cure-all for all issues at home.
- The main focus of this first conference will be to acknowledge how you work as a family, accept responsibility for past actions, and make a plan for better communication in the future.
- This conference will not address expectations for the future. That will be addressed during the second conference.
- As much as possible, be positive and future-oriented.
- Acknowledge the past, but do not get stuck there.
- Choose your battles. Spend time considering: What is most important? What issues may be worth letting go of? In other words, try to decipher your "non-negotiables" from issues on which you would be willing to compromise.
- Think about what is realistic vs. idealistic in regards to change. If it is not realistic, people won't change.
- Try to come up with a list of qualities that you appreciate in your teen.

## Restorative Justice—Fundamental Principle

The Intercept Program employs a restorative justice approach to our courses. Inevitably, conflict arises when a group of people are living in close quarters, working hard together, and faced daily with obstacles that often seem insurmountable.

Restorative justice is an approach to justice that focuses on the needs of the victims and the offenders, as well as the involved community. Victims take an active role in the process, while offenders are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions, "to repair the harm they've done—by apologizing, returning stolen money, or community service". In addition, it provides help for the offender in order to avoid future offences. It is based on a theory of justice that considers crime and wrongdoing an offence against an individual or community, rather than the state. Restorative justice that fosters dialogue between victim and offender shows the highest rates of victim satisfaction and offender accountability.

A **criminal justice** approach asks three guiding questions:

1. Which laws were broken?
2. Who did it?
3. What is the punishment?

Within a **restorative justice** framework, three very different questions guide the process:

1. What harm has been done (and who has been hurt by this event)?
2. What must be done to repair the harm? (This considers the needs of the victim, the offender, and the community.)
3. Whose responsibility is it to repair the harm?

Qualities that make an experience restorative:

- Everyone has a voice
- People are honest about harm they've done and how they've been affected by the harm
- All parties are engaged and willing to participate in the process
- Rules and punishment are not the focus
- It is not shame-based
- Consequences for retribution are about making things "right" and not about suffering or revenge
- Taking responsibility is valued over the making of the mistake
- Consensus

**How are restorative justice principles used on an Intercept course?** When conflicts arise, they provide a phenomenal learning opportunity for students to work through conflict, take responsibility for their actions, and make plans for how they will approach similar situations in the future. Often the whole group is involved in this process, even if the conflict is only between two individuals within the whole group.

**Why?** Because our actions affect one another. In the early days of their Intercept course your child will see this clearly. Learning how to live together in a positive manner takes precedent over any mileage goal or routine task. Relationships are paramount on an Outward Bound course. We use restorative justice to maintain healthy, communicative relationships within a group.

We will discuss the restorative process, how it occurred during your child's course, and how it might apply to your relationships back home during the Family Seminar.





5. Whose responsibility is it to repair the harm?
6. What could *you* do to repair the harm?
7. After reviewing the Restorative Justice information and completing the questions above, reflect on this “Restorative” approach. How is it different from the way you have approached challenges in the past? How is it similar?

## Week Five (Days 28-34)

The first expedition is behind them. The first Transition Phase and conversations are behind them as well. What undoubtedly seemed daunting when they arrived now seems manageable and achievable. They are more than halfway through, they know each other very well, and they have the skills to thrive in this new environment. In fact, the environment no longer feels new and this no longer feels like a wilderness trip or a course. Rather, it is simply beginning to feel like life.

Last week was challenging for everyone, however, and in some ways more challenging than time in the wilderness. The Transition Phase requires students to have one foot in two different worlds. Last week was a balance of both celebrating accomplishments and acknowledging all of the hard work ahead. It was a balance of being present in the experience and simultaneously thinking about life after Outward Bound.

This week your son and daughter and their team are about to begin a second wilderness expedition. The second expedition sets a semester course apart from other Outward Bound experiences for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, it offers students the ability to truly excel, and consequently discover their strengths in a new way. For some of them it's the first time in a long time they can remember what it feels like to be truly successful and take pride in their accomplishments. They are also becoming more competent and confident. As a result, on this expedition we are able to guide students as they travel to reflect on three important things: 1) the phone conversations they had with you last week and how they hope to contribute to that relationship in the future, 2) what they hope to accomplish beyond their Outward Bound experience, and 3) what strengths they have discovered over the past few weeks that will aid them in accomplishing those goals.

Another thing that sets this expedition apart is that the students are in charge. Yes, your child and their peers are running their own wilderness expedition! This is a big deal, and we wouldn't provide this challenge if we did not think they could be successful. Prior to departure of this second expedition, the student group planned their entire route and estimated mileage. They planned and packed all of their own food and equipment. They also revisited the conversation about how they want to live together in their small community. This expedition is all about responsibility. (See the information about *Circles of Responsibility* at the front of the workbook). It is about taking charge of their lives, as individuals and as a group. And it is about how to transfer those important skills back to life at home.

The following questions are aimed to help you reflect on the conversations you had with your child last week as well as to consider the things you are hoping to accomplish, learn, etc. during the remainder of the course:

### Reflection following the conference and on beginning the second half of the course?

1. How did you feel after hanging up the phone with your child? What was it like to hear their voice for the first time in several weeks?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What part(s) of the conversation gave you the most hope? What part(s) of the conversation leave you with the most apprehension?





## Week Six (Days 35-42)

Your child is still in the wilderness and in the middle of the second expedition. The group will go through some of the same challenges they faced before: how to live together, how to communicate, and how to balance freedom and responsibility. Your child and their peers not only have the skills necessary to confront those challenges; they also have been practicing those skills every day, all day, for more than a month. They still are making mistakes, making poor decisions, and probably saying things they don't mean to each other. However, they are learning how to rebound from those mistakes and the instructors are giving them the space they need as a group to correct them. They are also learning how to take responsibility for their actions when they fall short of the expectations of their instructors, their peers, or themselves.

During this week, the group has likely moved from the Mastery Phase to the Final Phase of their Outward Bound course. (See information about *Circles of Responsibility* at the beginning of the workbook). Again, Mastery phase is designed to mirror that nebulous time in a young adult's life when they have many of the responsibilities, and hence freedoms, of adulthood, but before they are truly ready to embrace that new role. The Final Phase, however, is designed to mirror true adulthood, and students are charged with a very high level of responsibility.

For example, this week, the students are setting their own daily schedule, creating mileage benchmarks, choosing where to camp, and adjusting plans based on the weather, the physical and mental state of the group, and the myriad other variables that make up everyday life on a wilderness expedition. They are also responsible for resolving their own conflicts, making decisions together, and ensuring that they are holding themselves accountable to both individual and group goals. These increased responsibilities and freedoms lead to a feeling of stress and a greater sense of urgency. On the other hand, they also lead to a feeling of pride, independence, and a deep sense of accomplishment.

During Week 6 your child will also engage in a second Solo experience. Similar to the first experience, it is intended to give pause to the rigors of an expedition routine as well as provide time and space to reflect. The difference this time is that they know themselves a little better. Instructors again provide your child with assignments. However, the focus is less on the past and more on planning, setting goals, and transferring skills and strengths from Outward Bound to life in the future. Your child will also be writing a letter to you during this time. You will receive this during the first day of the Family Seminar. (Similarly, you will write a letter to them next week. See Week 7 assignments for details).

The following questions mirror some of the things that your child has been asked to reflect on during the second Solo experience. They are intended to identify obstacles, but with a focus on strengths:

### **Using Strengths to Overcome Obstacles:**

1. List three of your child's greatest strengths:

- 
2. How do you feel these strengths will help your child succeed in their goals?
3. List three of your greatest strengths, not just as a parent, but as a person:
4. How have these strengths led to your success?
5. What are the biggest obstacles you see between your child and the accomplishment of their goals?

6. Which pieces of those obstacles are in your control? Which do you have no control over?
7. What support can you offer them in overcoming those obstacles and achieving their goals?
8. What goals did you have when you were your child's age? What obstacles did you face?
9. If you overcame your obstacles as a young adult, how did you do it and what support did you need? If you were unable to overcome those obstacle, why? What support do you wish you would have had during that time in your life?



10. If you could communicate one thing to your child right now, while they are at their own campsite engaged in a Solo experience and preparing to complete this undertaking of a 50-day Outward Bound course, what would it be?

## **Week Seven (Days 43-50)**

Congratulations! You are almost there; and so is your child! This week your child will finish the second expedition. They will forever be able to say that they traveled many, many miles under their own power across an unbelievably rugged and pristine landscape. This is a unique accomplishment, and something that very few people in this day and age can relate to. They have completed something huge, and regardless if they do something like this again, nobody will ever be able to take this accomplishment away.

This week marks the beginning of a second Transition Phase. This week is important in acknowledging both the accomplishments of the course and the work still ahead. It would be very difficult for a student to go straight from this extended experience onto an airplane and back to their life at home. We often liken it to the adjustment that occurs for some when returning from a foreign country. It takes time to readjust to a familiar environment that will now be seen through different eyes.

This week gives students time to process what lessons, skills, or qualities about themselves that they hope to bring forward from their Outward Bound experience to life at home. Likewise, it allows them to consider parts of themselves, habits, or behaviors they hope to leave behind as they transition back to life at home, work, school, family, or society. This week includes more volunteer service work, focused conversations and workshops with instructors and the Course Director, and time at basecamp to engage in fun activities and simply enjoy time with one another without the pressures of expedition travel.

Your work this week is two-fold: filling out the Expectations and Incentives assignments introduced and crafting a second letter to your child. Continue reading below for instructions for each section:

## Instructions for Writing the Second Letter

**Complete this BEFORE the Seminar.**

We will collect this letter prior to the first day of the Family Seminar. Please have it ready. That day we will also provide the letter written to you by your child during their second Solo experience. Every parent living with the child is encouraged to write a letter. **Every parent attending the Seminar is required to write one, and each parent should write a separate letter.**

**Some useful reminders when crafting this letter:** Use the questions below as a guideline for the letter. Your child was given a similar framework from which to write to you. The questions are meant to guide you, not limit you. Answer them in any order you wish. The letter is intended to be meaningful, but not formal. Remember that your child will be reading these letters the night before they reunite with you. Consider what you want to communicate in order to set the tone for the following day.

It is okay, and even appropriate, to touch on some of the reasons your child is involved in the Intercept program. There were challenges leading up to this point and we cannot pretend that those challenges are not present. Be honest. Be direct. However, if this is the sole focus of the letter your child may not be very receptive during the family conference. **Therefore, it is very important to be positive and remain future-oriented rather than focusing only on your child's past behaviors.** Also, do your best to balance an appreciation for who they are without over-emphasizing who you would like them to be. The letter serves as the first step in the reunion process. Let it reflect the tone you hope to set for the reunion and the conference.

**Do not include any huge surprises** (i.e. a tragedy, a divorce, etc.). This can distract greatly from your child's ability to be present during their conversations with you. If there have been big family changes that occurred while your child was with us, please contact your Course Director. They will work with you to make a plan for how and when to communicate this to your child. Likewise, contact your Course Director with any other questions or concerns regarding this letter writing process.

### Questions to address when crafting the letter to your child:

- What was it like to talk to your child on the phone a few weeks ago?
- What did you like about that conversation?
- Were there things from that conversation that you feel need more attention? If so, what?
- Would you like to share any of the challenges you foresee facing as a family when your child returns? What are *you* willing to do to address those challenges?
- What hopes do you have for your family and your relationship with your child? What really excites you about the future of it?
- What are you most proud of your child for in regards to this course? What makes you proud to be their parent? This may have nothing at all to do with the course.
- Is there anything that you have learned through your Outward Bound experience that you would like to share?
- Close with positive remarks. How are you feeling about seeing your child? What are you most looking forward about having them home?

## Expectations of Yourself

What are you willing to bring “to the table” (to change in yourself regardless of what your daughter or son will be willing to change) in order to improve your relationship with your child? Use the chart below to help record your answers to this question.

<b>Your Expectations of Yourself</b>		
<b>Expectations of Your Self</b> (things you are willing to, or even excited to change)	<b>Consequences</b> (the natural result of not changing)	<b>Tools for change</b> (methods that may help you enact this change)
<i>Example:</i> Nag less.  <i>Example:</i> Avoid losing my temper.  <i>Example:</i> Take personal time during the day.	Child won't listen and won't do it anyway.  Relationship worsens. Child doesn't listen when it's important.  More stress. Feeling overwhelmed. Potential to take it out on family members.	Create a clear list of chores and other expectations around the house.  Take time away when I'm frustrated. Apologize when I do lose my temper.  Commit to a routine.
1.		
2.		
3.		

## Expectations of Your Child

Use the following points to help you complete the chart on the following page.

**There is a difference between a consequence and a punishment.** Consequences are created *before* a rule is violated. This allows the individual a choice with a clear understanding of the results of that choice. Punishments, on the other hand, are given *after* a rule is broken as a reactive measure. Consequences are more effective in teaching responsibility and accountability.

**Natural consequences** occur without your intervention. For example, skipping school leads to expulsion. That said, if a natural consequence is not acceptable to you, the next step is establishing a **logical consequence**. (See the chart below for some examples.) It may be possible to work together with your child to come to an agreement on these consequences. Consider the benefits (as well as the potential pitfalls) of giving your child a day in designing the rules of the house. Logical consequences are most effective when established in a progression of increased severity (see below for examples). You may call it Level One for short-term and Level Two for longer-term, when severity of behavior increases, or when Level One consequences are exhausted and you are looking for another intervention. In the assignment below you do not necessarily need to match the logical consequence with the behavior right now. Rather, you may simply brainstorm a list. It's up to you.

A final note: pay attention to **your emotional reaction** to their behavior. Are you afraid, frustrated, sad, angry? One thing that your child will inevitably learn during this course is that our actions affect one another. Additionally, emotions help indicate why we are concerned. For example, they may not abide by the decided curfew. This can make you fearful if you worry about their safety. It can frustrate you if it's yet another example of disrespect for you. Having an accurate understanding of this will help your communication.

## Expectations of Your Child

Your Expectations of your Child				
<b>Child's Behavior</b>	<b>Your Reaction</b> (how that behavior affects you)	<b>Expectations of Your Child</b> (behaviors you expect your child to change upon returning home)	<b>Natural Consequence</b>	<b>Logical Consequence</b>
<i>Example:</i> Drinking alcohol	Sad and scared for their safety. Angry when it's in the house.	No drinking before 21.	Potential health problems. Potential legal problems. Potential damage to relationships.	1. No use of the car 2. Further intervention or treatment program.
<i>Example:</i> Angry outbursts	Frustrated. Disrespected. Angry. Bad example for younger siblings.	Talk about your problems before they build up. Spend time with the family and not always in the bedroom.	Poor relationships. Less communication. Increased frustration from not dealing with problems.	1. Time out 2. Counseling
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

## **Incentives (or in other words, Positive Logical Consequences)**

Please create a list of positive incentives (freedoms) that will encourage your teen to work on changing their negative behaviors. Incentives can effectively help your teen understand that the result of being more trustworthy and responsible results in earning more freedoms and privileges.

These items do not have to be monetary. It is best if they are important to your teen and demonstrate that they are upholding their end of the agreement. Try to make a list that includes some short-term incentives that can be granted weekly or once every two weeks. You might call these Level One incentives. Examples of increased freedoms can include: change in curfew, number of nights out per week, more TV/phone/computer time, dinner out with friends, a job, or use of the car.

Try to come up with some bigger “carrots” to work towards, or Level two incentives. These can help your teen stay on track with their agreement. Some ideas for Level two incentives are: a vacation, driver’s education, more use of the family car, and financial help with a larger purchase. Try to come up with a list that works within your value system and economics. It is important that if you use incentives, they are of value to your teen.

For help with this process, do not hesitate to contact your Course Director.

<b><u>Incentives (or Positive Logical Consequences)</u></b>
<b>Level One:</b>          
<b>Level Two:</b>          

## Further Resources

### Books:

#### Parenting

Adolescents on the Spectrum: A Parent's Guide to the Cognitive, Social, Physical, and Transition Needs of Teenagers with Autism Spectrum Disorders. Sicile-Kira, Chantal. (2006)

Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead. Brown, Brene, PhD. (2012).

How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character. Tough, Paul. (2012).

How to Talk So Teens Will Listen and Listen So Teens Will Talk. Faber, Adele and Elaine Mazlish. (2006)

Rising Strong: How the Ability to Reset Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead. Brown, Brene, PhD. (2017).

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families. Covey, Stephen (2007)

The Biggest Job We'll Ever Have: Find the Right Balance Between Character and Achievement for Your Child. Gaud, Laura and Malcolm Scribner (2002)

The Parent App: Understanding Families in the Digital Age. Schofield Clark, Lynn. (2013).

The Price of Privilege: How Parents Pressure and Material Advantage are Creating a Generation of Disconnected and Unhappy Kids. Levine, Madeline, PhD. (2006).

The Talk: A Breakthrough Guide to Raising Healthy Kids in an Oversexualized, Online, In-Your-Face World. Maxwell, Sharon, PhD. (2008).

#### Specific to Girls

Enough As She Is: How to Help Girls Move Beyond Impossible Standards of Success to Live Healthy, Happy, and Fulfilling Lives. Simmons, Rachel. (2018)

Untangled: Guiding Teenage Girls Through the Seven Transitions into Adulthood. Damour, Lisa. (2017)

Parenting a Teen Girl: A Crash Course on Conflict, Communication, and Connection with Your Teenage Daughter. Hemmen, Lucie PhD. (2012).

Girls Will be Girls: Raising Confident and Courageous Daughters. Deak, JoAnn, PhD. & Barker, Teresa. (2002).

Girls on the Edge: The Four Factors Driving the New Crisis for Girls. Sax, Leonard, M.D., PhD. (2010).

Ophelia Speaks: Adolescent Girls Write About Their Search for Self. Shandler, Sara. (1999).

Augusta, Gone. Dudman, Martha Tod. (2001).

Queen Bees and Wannabes: Helping Your Daughter Survive Cliques, Gossip, Boyfriends, and the New Realities of Girl World. Wiseman, Rosalind. (2002, 2009).



### **Specific to Boys**

Real Boys' Voices. Pollack, William S., PhD., Shuster, Todd. (2002).

Masterminds and Wingmen: Helping Our Boys Cope with Schoolyard Power, Locker-Room Tests, Girlfriends, and the New Rules of Boy World. Wiseman, Rosalind. (2013).

Boys Adrift: The Five Factors Driving the Growing Epidemic of Unmotivated Boys and Underachieving Young Men. Sax, Leonard, M.D., PhD. (2007).

### **Drugs, Alcohol, and Self-Harm**

Smoking, Drinking, and Drug Use in Young Adulthood: The Impacts of New Freedoms and New Responsibilities. Bachman, Jerald G., Wadsworth, Katherine N., O'Malley, Patrick M., & Johnston, Lloyd D., Schulenberg, John E. (1997).

Teens Under the Influence: The Truth About Kids, Alcohol, and Other Drugs - How to Recognize the Problem and What to Do About It. Ketcham, Katherine, and Pace, Nicholas A., M.D. (2003).

Reclaim Your Family from Addiction: How Couples and Families Recover Love and Meaning. Nakken, Craig. Hazelden (2000).

When Your Child is Cutting: A Parent's Guide to Helping Children Overcome Self-Injury. McVey-Noble, Merry E., PhD., Khemlani-Patel, Sony, PhD., Neziroglu, Fugen, PhD. (2006).

If Your Adolescent Has an Eating Disorder. Walsh, B. Timothy, M.D., Cameron, V.L. (2005).

A Bright Red Scream: Self-Mutilation and the Language of Pain. Strong, Marilee. (1999).

### **Outward Bound, Outdoor Education, etc.**

Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder. Louv, Richard. (2005).

Kurt Hahn's Schools and Legacy: To Discover You Can be More and Do More Than You Believed. Flavin, Martin. (1998).

Shouting at the Sky: Troubled Teens and the Promise of the Wild. Ferguson, Gary. (1999).

Outward Bound USA: Crew Not Passengers. Miner, Josh & Boldt, Joe. (1981).

### **The Brain**

The Teenage Brain: A Neuroscientist's Survival Guide to Raising Adolescents and Young Adults. Jensen, Frances E, MD. (2016)

Why Do They Act That Way?: A Survival Guide to the Adolescent Brain for You and Your Teen. Walsh, David, PhD. (2004).

Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain. Ratey, John J. MD & Hagerman, Eric. Little, (2008).

Brainstorm: The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain. Sigel, Daniel J, M.D. Penguin Publishing. (2014).

## **Theory**

Choice Theory: A New Psychology of Personal Freedom. Glasser, William, M.D. (1998).

Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences. Gardner, Howard. (2004).

## **Website Resources:**

1. **University of Minnesota Teen Link:**  
<http://www.extension.umn.edu/family/families-with-teens/>
2. **PBS FRONTLINE: Inside the Teenage Brain**  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/teenbrain/>
3. **National Institute for Mental Health: The Teen Brain, Still Under Construction**  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/the-teen-brain-still-under-construction/index.shtml>
4. **Help Guide:**  
[www.helpguide.org](http://www.helpguide.org)
5. **Family Education:**  
[www.familyeducation.com](http://www.familyeducation.com) (click on "Teens")