

Teens can't resist—really

Don't get mad the next time you catch your teenager texting when he promised to be studying. He or she simply may not be able to resist.



A University of Iowa study in Psychological Science found teenagers are far more sensitive than adults to the immediate effect or reward of their behaviors. The findings may help explain, for example, why the initial rush of texting may be more enticing for adolescents than the long-term payoff of studying. They need help in regulating their attention so they can develop impulse-control skills.

For parents, that means limiting distractions so teenagers can make better choices. Take the homework and social media dilemma: At 9 p.m., shut off everything except a computer that has no access to Facebook or Twitter, the researchers advise.