

stories that open with action and are full of narrative tension, set the room temperature lower (boys prefer it colder), allow boys to move around more in class, and accept a wider variety of boy-friendly topics for them to write about.

■ To boost girls' grades researchers say teachers should encourage them to be noisier in class and turn up the thermostat.

4 **Creative paths to addiction**—The technological "extensions" that teenagers love have quickly moved from tool status to integrated addictions. For example, a quarter of all teenagers check for messages or text someone within 10 minutes of getting up in the morning. And close to half (44%) say texting is their primary communication mode.

Meanwhile, kids who play video games spend a third less time doing homework and reading than kids who don't. Video-gaming is close to earning formal designation as an addiction—a 30-year-old Chinese man died from exhaustion after spending three straight days playing video games online in a public Internet cafe.

Here's how Leo Tolstoy famously opened his classic novel *Anna Karenina*: "All happy families are like one another; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." Substitute "teenagers" for "families" and you've got a revealing twist on a Tolstoy-ian truth—happy kids are often happy for the same reasons, but struggling kids are unhappy for a billion different reasons.

Today, here's why a lot of kids are unhappy in their own way:

1 **Bullies, gangs, and bad behavior**—According to a survey of 7th- and 8th- graders by the National Association of Secondary School Principals and Phi Delta Kappa, kids' top problems at school are:

- Bullies and Gangs **15%**
- Kids' Bad Behavior... **14%**
- Social Pressures..... **12%**
- Adults' Bad Behavior **10%**

2 **You're getting sleepy...very sleepy**—Because of their over-scheduled, over-cafeinated, multitasking

lifestyles, exhaustion among teenagers is an epidemic. Lauren Boyle, a history teacher at Waltham High School in Massachusetts, told Newsweek: "I've learned never to dim the lights, even to show a video. If I do, there are days when a third of the class falls asleep." Sleep deprivation is nothing to snooze at—it's been tied to diabetes, heart disease, obesity, depression, a shorter life span, and deadly car accidents. Researchers say most teenagers need nine hours of sleep a night, but more than half get seven hours or less. A University of Colorado study found

than 82 percent of all kids "wake up tired and unrefreshed."

3 **Coed no more**—More than 300 school districts across the U.S. are now experimenting with single-gender classes in an effort to boost kids' academic performance, especially among boys. Boys lag behind girls in almost every academic subject. And that has educational researchers looking for ways to experiment with strategies that allow for gender learning differences.

■ To boost boys' grades researchers say teachers should use