



Academic Dishonesty

Put a Stop to Cheating
in *Your* School.

The *Honest* Truth:

Statistics show that cheating among high school students has risen dramatically during the past 50 years.

In the past it was the struggling student who was more likely to cheat to get by. Today it is also the above-average college-bound students who are cheating.

While about 20% of college students admitted to cheating in high school during the 1940's, today between 75% and 98% of college students surveyed each year report having cheated in high school.

Researchers believe that cheating may begin in

elementary school when children break or bend the rules to win competitive games against classmates.

Research about cheating among middle school children (ages 12-14) has shown that there is increased motivation to cheat because there is more emphasis on grades; even those students who say it is wrong, cheat; if the goal is to get a good grade, they will cheat.

According to one recent survey of middle schoolers, 2/3 of respondents reported cheating on exams, while 9/10 reported copying another's homework.

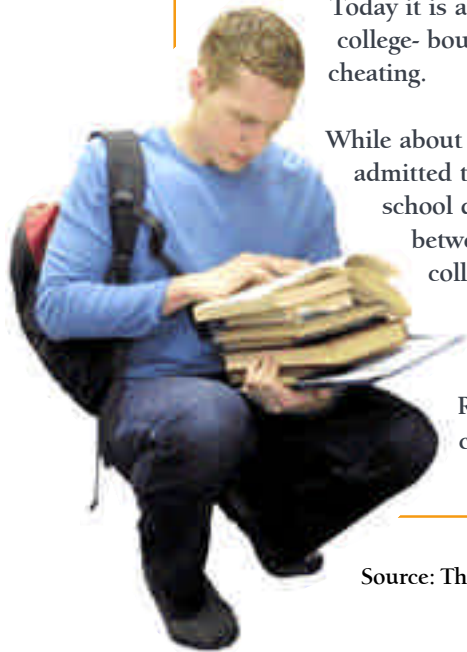
According to the 1998 poll of *Who's Who Among American High School Students*, 80% of the country's best students cheated

to get to the top of their class. More than half the students surveyed said they don't think cheating is a big deal - and most did not get caught.

According to surveys conducted by The Josephson Institute of Ethics among 20,000 middle and high school students, 64% of high school students admitted to cheating in 1996. That number jumped to 70% in 1998.

Math and Science are the courses in which cheating most often occurs.

Computers can make cheating easier than ever before. For example, students can download term papers from the Web.



Source: The Center for Academic Integrity, www.academicintegrity.org/cai_research.asp

Why Cheat?

“I actually think cheating is *good*. A person who has an entirely honest life can't succeed these days.”

“What's important is getting ahead ... The better you do, that's what shows. It's not how moral you were in getting there.”



“We students know that ... we are almost completely judged on our grades. They are so important that **we will sacrifice our own integrity** to make a **good impression.**”

Where Are the Teachers?



- ◆ 47% of the students believe teachers sometimes elect not to confront students they know are cheating;
- ◆ of those students, 26% said they believed teachers simply don't want to be bothered by reporting suspected academic dishonesty.

According to a survey conducted by Donald McCabe, a professor of management at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ, which included 4,500 high school students in 14 public and 11 private high schools across the country.

So, why do they turn the other way? “[Teachers are] afraid of retaliation by the parents,” one specialist contends. “They’d rather not have to deal with the parents. It’s a hassle.”

Source: “Many Teachers Ignore Cheating, Survey Finds,” *Education Week*, May 19, 2001. www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2001/05/09/34cheat.h20.html

What do statistics say?

Report Card 2004: The Ethics of American Youth

The following tables display results from the Josephson Institute's 2002 and 2004 surveys on the ethics of American youth. Please note that all percentages are rounded to the whole number and overall response rates are indicated on the last row of each table. Each table is listed below.

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How many students ...

| | |
|--|----|
| ... copied an Internet document for a classroom assignment? | 6 |
| ... cheated during a test at school? | 7 |
| ... copied another's homework? | 8 |
| ... cheated or "bent the rules" to win in sports?..... | 9 |
| ... say that, "in the real world, successful people do what they have to do to win, even if others consider it cheating."..... | 10 |
| ... say that, "a person has to lie or cheat sometimes in order to succeed."..... | 11 |
| ... say that, "my parents/guardians would rather I cheat than get bad grades."..... | 12 |
| ... say that, "it's not worth it to lie and cheat because it hurts your character."..... | 13 |



Report Card 2004: Student Ethics

How many students ...

... copied an Internet document for a classroom assignment?



| | At least once | | Two or More Times | |
|------------------------------------|---------------|-------|-------------------|-------|
| | 2002 | 2004 | 2002 | 2004 |
| High Schools (Overall) | n/a | 35% | n/a | 18% |
| Public High Schools | | 35% | | 18% |
| Private Religious High Schools | | 35% | | 19% |
| Private Non-Religious High Schools | | 27% | | 14% |
| Overall High School Responses | ↓ | 8,309 | ↓ | 4,383 |

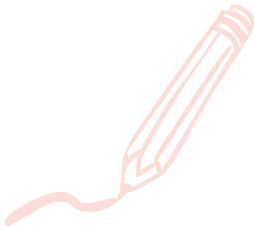
Source: *Report Card 2004: The Ethics of American Youth*, Question 43, Josephson Institute's 2002 and 2004 surveys on the ethics of American youth.



Report Card 2004: Student Ethics

How many students ...

... cheated during a test at school?



| | At least once | | Two or More Times | |
|------------------------------------|---------------|--------|-------------------|-------|
| | 2002 | 2004 | 2002 | 2004 |
| High Schools (Overall) | 74% | 62% | 48% | 38% |
| Public High Schools | 72% | 61% | 46% | 36% |
| Private Religious High Schools | 78% | 66% | 52% | 42% |
| Private Non-Religious High Schools | 54% | 46% | 32% | 24% |
| Overall High School Responses | 8,920 | 14,908 | 5,794 | 9,054 |

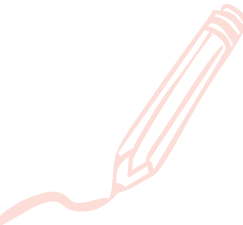
Source: Report Card 2004: The Ethics of American Youth, Question 44, Josephson Institute's 2002 and 2004 surveys on the ethics of American youth.



Report Card 2004: Student Ethics

How many students ...

... copied another's homework?



| | At least once | | Two or More Times | |
|------------------------------------|---------------|--------|-------------------|--------|
| | 2002 | 2004 | 2002 | 2004 |
| High Schools (Overall) | n/a | 83% | n/a | 64% |
| Public High Schools | | 82% | | 61% |
| Private Religious High Schools | | 87% | | 68% |
| Private Non-Religious High Schools | | 75% | | 52% |
| Overall High School Responses | ↓ | 19,929 | ↓ | 15,209 |

Source: Report Card 2004: The Ethics of American Youth, Question 45, Josephson Institute's 2002 and 2004 surveys on the ethics of American youth.



Report Card 2004: Student Ethics

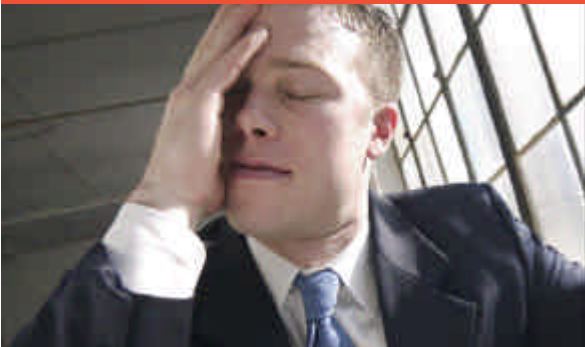
How many students ...

... cheated or “bent the rules” to win in sports?



| | At least once | | Two or More Times | |
|------------------------------------|---------------|-------|-------------------|-------|
| | 2002 | 2004 | 2002 | 2004 |
| High Schools (Overall) | n/a | 23% | n/a | 12% |
| Public High Schools | ↓ | 24% | ↓ | 12% |
| Private Religious High Schools | ↓ | 23% | ↓ | 12% |
| Private Non-Religious High Schools | ↓ | 21% | ↓ | 11% |
| Overall High School Responses | ↓ | 5,516 | ↓ | 2,726 |

Source: Report Card 2004: The Ethics of American Youth, Question 58, Josephson Institute’s 2002 and 2004 surveys on the ethics of American youth.



Report Card 2004: Student Ethics

How many students said ...

... in the real world, successful people do what they have to do to win, even if others consider it cheating.



| | Strongly Agree or Agree | | Disagree or Strongly Disagree | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------|-------------------------------|-------|
| | 2002 | 2004 | 2002 | 2004 |
| High Schools (Overall) | n/a | 59% | n/a | 41% |
| Public High Schools | | 59% | | 41% |
| Private Religious High Schools | | 59% | | 41% |
| Private Non-Religious High Schools | | 59% | | 41% |
| Overall High School Responses | ↓ | 13,145 | ↓ | 9,016 |

Source: Report Card 2004: The Ethics of American Youth, Question 8, Josephson Institute's 2002 and 2004 surveys on the ethics of American youth.



Report Card 2004: Student Ethics

How many students said ...

... a person has to lie or cheat sometimes in order to succeed.



| | Strongly Agree or Agree | | Disagree or Strongly Disagree | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|------|-------------------------------|-------|
| | 2002 | 2004 | 2002 | 2004 |
| High Schools (Overall) | 43% | 42% | 57% | 59% |
| Public High Schools | 42% | 42% | 58% | 58% |
| Private Religious High Schools | 42% | 41% | 58% | 59% |
| Private Non-Religious High Schools | 36% | 41% | 64% | 59% |
| Overall High School Responses | 4777 | 9418 | 6397 | 13261 |

Source: Report Card 2004: The Ethics of American Youth, Question 9, Josephson Institute's 2002 and 2004 surveys on the ethics of American youth.



Report Card 2004: Student Ethics

How many students said ...

... my parents/guardians would rather I cheat than get bad grades.



| | Strongly Agree or Agree | | Disagree or Strongly Disagree | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------|-------------------------------|--------|
| | 2002 | 2004 | 2002 | 2004 |
| High Schools (Overall) | 7% | 6% | 93% | 94% |
| Public High Schools | 8% | 8% | 92% | 92% |
| Private Religious High Schools | 6% | 4% | 94% | 96% |
| Private Non-Religious High Schools | 3% | 3% | 97% | 97% |
| Overall High School Responses | 827 | 1,424 | 10,593 | 21,847 |

Source: Report Card 2004: The Ethics of American Youth, Question 12, Josephson Institute's 2002 and 2004 surveys on the ethics of American youth.



Report Card 2004: Student Ethics

How many students said ...

... it's not worth it to lie and cheat because it hurts your character.



| | Strongly Agree or Agree | | Disagree or Strongly Disagree | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------|-------------------------------|-------|
| | 2002 | 2004 | 2002 | 2004 |
| High Schools (Overall) | 79% | 84% | 21% | 16% |
| Public High Schools | 78% | 84% | 22% | 16% |
| Private Religious High Schools | 80% | 84% | 20% | 16% |
| Private Non-Religious High Schools | 82% | 86% | 18% | 14% |
| Overall High School Responses | 8,566 | 19,202 | 2,309 | 3,579 |

Source: Report Card 2004: The Ethics of American Youth, Question 14, Josephson Institute's 2002 and 2004 surveys on the ethics of American youth.



How Can *We* Curb Cheating in *Our* School?

To get started ...

Focus on kids' sense of pride. Encourage them to do work honestly so they can have the satisfaction of telling others, "I did that on my own."

Assure children that cheating is neither "normal" nor acceptable. Many kids believe that "everybody" cheats and that parents don't care if they cheat and/or don't want to know about it. Make it your business to disprove that fallacy.

Ask children to consider where the world would be today if everybody cheated. How would they feel knowing that their doctor cheated on his or her medical exams or that one of their heroes (Sammy Sosa or Britney Spears, for example) cheated to get ahead?

Don't lose sight of the "education factor." Young children love to learn. Focus on fueling that interest and on encouraging strong efforts, rather than obsessing over grades and scores.

Source: From the article, "What Can We Do to Curb Student Cheating," published in *Scholastic Administrator*, October 19, 2004.



21 Ways to Curb
Cheating in *Your* School



1

Establish an academic honor code. Surveys conducted by the Center for Academic Integrity in 1990, 1995, and 1999, involving over 12,000 students on 48 different campuses, showed that serious test cheating on campuses with honor codes is typically 1/3 to 1/2 lower than the level on those without honor codes. The level of serious cheating on written assignments is 1/4 to 1/3 lower.

2

Explain and discuss your academic honor code. Help students understand all forms of academic honesty: plagiarism, copyright infringement, and receiving inappropriate help on a project. Have all students sign their name to the code in pledge of academic honesty.

3

Understand why students cheat. Once you understand the behavior behind academic dishonesty, you can begin attacking the causes. Some of the major reasons that can be addressed (especially by advisors):

- ◆ Taking the shortest route possible
- ◆ Students are faced with too many choices, so they put off low priorities
- ◆ Poor time management and planning skills
- ◆ Some students fear that their writing ability is inadequate
- ◆ The thrill of rule breaking



Reducing Cheating: During In-Class Tests

4

Don't wait for the day of the test to tell students how you'll handle cheating. By then, it's too late to motivate students to study, rather than just cheat. Instead, give warnings about cheating a day or two before the test. By doing that, you might motivate a potential cheater to study instead.

5

Avoid tests with true/false, fill-in-the-blank, or multiple-choice questions. Instead, give short answer tests.

6

Create multiple sets of the tests. On one set, type the questions from 1 to 10; on the other set, arrange the questions in the opposite order. Copy one set of questions on white paper, the other set on yellow paper. Pass out the two versions of the test to alternate rows of students.

7

Don't take away the paper of a suspected cheater, or reprimand him or her in the middle of taking a test. Such an action will only cause a disturbance, which provides other students an opportunity to cheat. Instead, inform students before the test that, "If I suspect anyone is cheating, I won't say anything during the test... If you get your paper back with points off, you'll know why." A statement such as that may make students too nervous to cheat.





Reducing Cheating:
During In-Class Tests,

The motivation of the zero.

“If cheating occurs, my students know in advance that I will give out zeros and call parents. I also report cheating to the school administration. The word gets around. Nothing teaches better than example.”

- one teacher's method

8

Instruct all students to cover their answers. This gives students permission to do what they really want to do. Since you directed the action, there is less risk of peer disapproval.

9

Arrange desks in neat rows and sit in the back of the room. When cheaters can't see you, they become more nervous. Those who are tempted to cheat are likely to turn around in their seat to locate the teacher, making them easy to spot.

10

Checking possessions. Savvy students have been known to use cellphones and palm pilots to text-message answers to one another. Therefore, make sure that book bags and purses are closed and out of the way before the test begins.

11

Review machine-corrected tests. Look for identical incorrect answers, especially if two students make the same grade.

Reducing Cheating: Essays and Reports

12

Design writing assignments with specific goals and instructions. Avoid general paper topics, such as “write a five-page paper on anything related to the course, using at least five sources.” Instead, give *specific* instructions, and provide a limited selection of topics from which students may choose. Be specific about length and the number of sources required. The more specific your assignment is, the more difficult it will be for the potential plagiarist to find a paper online that fits the assignment.

13

Do your research first. Know what kinds of information is currently available online.

For example, if you're thinking of having students research The Battle of Gettysburg, check various online sources to get a feel for the type of material students may turn up:

- ◆ Web paper mills
- ◆ Search engines
- ◆ Magazines and journals

14

Give students enough time to do an assignment. Remember, students are juggling assignments from several classes. Help them plan their work by giving them enough advance notice for any assignment that requires research. Consider having students submit a research proposal or at least a topic idea early on. Students who have put off starting an assignment until the last minute are more likely to seek shortcuts, like plagiarism.



Reducing Cheating: Essays and Reports, cont.

15

Require oral presentations. When students are required to orally present information in addition to submitting it in written form, they are more likely to do the research, rather than simply cut and paste.

16

Have students submit papers electronically. Keep files organized by topic. This way you can feel confident about assigning the same topics each year. If a student paper sounds familiar, simply do a word or a phrase search in that directory.

17

Let students know that you know how to check for cheaters! Once students are aware that you use plagiarism detection tools or search engines (e.g., Alta Vista or Digital Integrity), they will be less likely to turn in plagiarized work.

18

Know your students' writing styles. Pay close attention to students' in-class writing styles; compare with at-home writing style. Sudden improvements or change in grammar, composition, or style, are all red flags.



Reducing Cheating: Essays and Reports, cont.



19

Assign topics that deal with new or current events. If you choose an event that has just recently occurred, students won't be able to access hundreds of articles online dealing with the topic, since few will already have been written.

20

Educate families about plagiarism. Students should be taught how to *correctly* use quotations. Teachers might even provide examples of how to cite information so they know what exactly is expected of them. As part of the Parent Education Plan, and in line with your school's mission, review with parents what type of work and/or behavior is unacceptable. Consequences should also be outlined.

21

Require process steps for the paper. For lengthy reports, try setting a series of dates prior to the due date to discuss or hand-in potential sources, a complete outline, preliminary bibliography, rough draft, etc.

Additional Resources:

The Center for Academic Integrity. A forum to identify, affirm, and promote the values of academic integrity among students, faculty, teachers and administrators. www.academicintegrity.org

“How to Discourage Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty: A Proactive Approach for Teachers.” A PDF by James Porter, Michigan State University. www.rhetoric.msu.edu/resources/teach_plagiarism.pdf

“Anti-Plagiarism Strategies for Research Papers.” Robert Harris. www.virtualsalt.com/antiplag.htm

“What Can We Do to Curb Student Cheating?” *Education World*. www.educationworld.com/a_admin/admin/admin375.shtml/

Plagiarism.org. An online resource for people concerned with the growing problem of Internet plagiarism. www.plagiarism.org

“Computers, The Internet, and Cheating Among Secondary School Students: Some Implications for Educators.” Stacey Conradson and Pedro Hernández-Ramos, Santa Clara University. <http://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?v=9&n=9>

“Curb Cheating With Prevention Strategies.” Kathleen Modenbach, National Education Association. www.nea.org/classmanagement/ifc031104.html

“E-cheating: Combating a 21st Century Challenge.” Kim McMurty, *The Journal*. <http://www.thejournal.com/magazine/vault/A3724.cfm>