



Caroline, 14

There is a place in our city where poor people get a free meal every day. Caroline's father organizes the meal six times a year. I think you will enjoy some of the vocabulary in this interview.

What have you been doing this week?

I've been grounded.* My report card* was so bad that I hid it from my parents. Then the school mailed another one. I was at my grandmother's house, and my dad came and got me. I can't do guitar lessons or hang out* with my friends or go on the computer. I'm grounded from* the internet.

How long are you grounded for?

Until my grades* get better.

Are you studying hard?

Yeah. I have no choice. That's the only thing I can do now. I have to study.

What are you doing here today?

Every two months I come here with my family. I like it. We feed people who are homeless or who have been in jail. I serve and help make food.

What classes are you taking at school?

Uh, English, world history, art, earth and environmental science, Algebra 1, PE,* and health.

Is there anything that you would like to say to kids in other countries?

Don't do drugs.* I've seen people do drugs, and it's bad. Study hard.

A Few Words

Grounded: When young American people do something wrong, their parents often tell them, "For a week (or a month) you cannot go anywhere except school and home." Young people say that they are "grounded." *Grounded* is the word for an airplane that cannot fly, and young people who must stay home feel like they are airplanes that cannot fly.

Report card: The piece of paper that tells how well or poorly a student is doing in school.

Hang out: Sit and talk to friends. This is informal English.

Grounded from: If a young person is not allowed to use a computer, telephone, or television, they say that they are "grounded from" the computer, the telephone, or the television.

Grades: Americans say "grades." British people say "marks."

PE: Physical education, a sports and exercise class.

Do drugs: In informal English, people "do drugs" instead of "use drugs."

Discussion Questions

1. In your country, what do parents usually do if a young person doesn't study hard or doesn't do well in school?
2. When you feel tired and don't want to study, what do you do?