

Parenting Teens: From Terrible to Transformed Teens

More Talk, Less Tell

Get into the habit of relaxed chatting. In a busy house it can be easy to talk to teenagers when we're asking them to DO STUFF. Taking the TIME to just TALK can let them know you care about them.

What's their world?

Be interested in their life and their culture. Who are their friends? What do they love? What are their opinions about music, politics, the environment, religion, celebrities, etc?

LISTEN so that Teens can TALK

Listen with your eyes as well as your ears, so that you can try to understand where they are coming from. Whether the house is in uproar or feeling very calm, try to hear your teenager's POINT of VIEW first.

THE BIG ISSUES

Avoid NO GO AREAS. Encourage a home where discussions about sex, drugs, peer pressure, alcohol, and money are safe. Use anything to get the chat started - soaps, books, celebs, school chat about friends. Avoid preaching and launching into a monologue about life according to you. Get your point across respectfully, conversation as an exchange of views and opinions.

Firm but Fair Fences

Stick to FIRM but FAIR rules & boundaries. What's your position about key areas: going out and coming in, contributing to the household, chores, attitudes to others at home, parents, siblings, etc? Are you and your partner in agreement?

Because your family is worth it

Work out what really matters in your family. Ask yourself 'Is this really worth it?' Perhaps clothes, tidiness, table manners, etc. just aren't worth picking a fight about, especially when there are other struggles going on e.g.: exam stress. Keep your powder dry for when it's important.

Team parent

Avoid making your different parenting styles a BATTLEGROUNDS. Work out any frustrations in private. As Two Heads are so often better than one, you can tackle the issues together and work for what everyone wants - a happier household!

When the pot starts to boil

Recognise and become aware of the FIRST SIGNS of your own ANGER.

Take a minute, slow yourself down and steady your voice. Instead of Blaming, describe the problem. If it all gets too much take some Time Out to think about what has been said and what you want to say. Watch your Timing too. Are you tired, hungry or in a rush?

Help your teenager express their anger, encouraging them to explain their feelings in as calm a way as possible. If they need to feel more in control, encourage a 'taking time out' habit.

Sorry is the hardest WORD

Saying SORRY with no ifs and buts. Parents are the most influential teachers when it comes to learning how to repair relationships effectively. Parenting means keeping a short account - When it's over, it's over.

Careless Talk costs Teenage Self Esteem

Watch how you talk. Self-esteem is especially fragile during the teenage years. Teasing, blaming and name-calling can destroy it. When there's conflict, stick to the issues - don't attack your teenager. When other problems are discussed, aim to be an encourager, a builder and a supporter. Your teenager will know they can trust you and come to you to discuss their difficulties.

