

Navigating Teen Years

Helpful Tips for Parents

Tell your teen family values. It is important that they know what you think about many subjects like drugs, drinking and sex. You should also give them the reasons you believe your values are a good choice.

Encourage them to have more than one group of friends. That way, if one set of friends start making poor choices, then they have other friends to hang out with.

Establish or set expectation and house rules. Make sure everyone understands what the rules mean and what will happen if they are broken. You might want to write the rules down and have the entire family sign them.

Note what your child likes to do for fun. Make sure to look at the movies/TV shows they watch, the games they play, what they do on the Internet, and where they hang out. You don't need to be a detective, but be involved in your teen's life.

Take time to talk to your teen. It is very important that you talk with your child about what's going on in their life. Try to have supper together at least 4 times each week (with the TV OFF).

Arrange for other adults to be there if your teen needs to talk or ask a question. Sometimes it may be easier for them to talk to someone other than a parent. Help them find other adults, like an uncle or aunt, close friend or pastor, who share your values and beliefs to answer their questions.

Listen. When you are talking with your teen make sure you also listen to what they have to say. If you do all the talking you may miss important things that are going on in their lives.

Keep talking. You may not think you are making any difference, but studies have shown that kids do hear what their parents tell them and it effects the choices they make.