



Parent's Survival Tips

Adolescence

Despite some adults' negative perceptions about teens, they are often energetic, thoughtful, and idealistic, with a deep interest in what's fair and right. Although it can be a period of conflict between parent and child, the teen years are also a time to help kids grow into the distinct individuals they will become.

Here are some useful tips for communicating and connecting with adolescent teens:

- Refuse to get confused. Part of growing up is acting like a two-year-old and an adult, all in the same day. Expect your teen to do this and be prepared to comfort, reassure and, on occasion, look the other way.
- Face the facts. Your teen will probably say "I know that," when you talk about the facts of life, but do it anyway. As a parent, you're the only one who can share the values that go with the facts!
- Let your affection show. Cool the physical demonstration especially when their friends are around, but make it loud and clear: You care!
- Cut those apron strings. Old values, taught from the cradle, may fade away during the teen years, but they come back—along with grown-up children you'll be proud to know. Trust your teens to make it all the way.

For information, support and referrals related to parenting and family concerns, please call the Parent Helpline at 1-800-CHILDREN.