

Learning in Families Together: Teens

Nine out of 10 teenagers don't get into trouble.

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Parenting Secrets

- Teens are beginning to disengage from their parents. As the time comes for them to leave home, parents are also beginning to reflect on their own lives and needs.
- Parenting is complex. With teens, a new adult-adult relationship must emerge.
- Research shows that parents who monitor their children can help prevent a number of risky behaviors, including alcohol use, sexual activity, delinquency, and other misconduct.
- Seek a balance between parental control and teen control, realizing that teens are expanding their independence and freedom.

Together Time

Youth begin to create their own identities and sometimes choose peers over parents.

- Stay involved and connected. Know their friends and their friends' families.
- Use everyday family activities to stay close (dinner, running errands, taking a walk, biking).
- Schedule time together. Studies show teens want to spend more time — not less — with their families. Put your heart into it.

Talk Time

Say more to your teen than just "Clean your room" or "Are you paying attention?"

- Talk about family vacation plans, serious illness, lifestyles, music, drugs, sex, feelings, the future, current affairs, personal interests, stories from your past.

Learning Time

To develop a caring teen, parents can model and practice caring through caring talk and actions.

- Modeling means acting the way you want your teen to act. Teens learn to mirror the adults in their lives.
- Caring talk is the chance to question why. Use open-ended questions such as "What do you think about...?" or "How could we figure this out?"