

Go to

LIVING WITH TEENAGERS



Some teens manage these years better than others. For those who struggle, their difficult attitudes & behaviours are often 'smoke-screens' for the overwhelming emotions they can't handle. Understanding, responsive parents can make all the difference.

Keeping your balance

Teens need to express the feelings they cannot cope with. They usually share negativities with people closest to them, where they feel safest.

Teens are expressing how they feel, NOT how they feel about you, but they often make it sound that way! Try to protect your own well-being by refusing to take negative words & actions personally. This way you stay strong enough to provide the support & guidance they need.

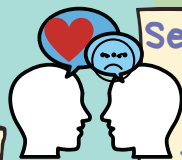
If things are getting tricky...

Give yourself a second.
Gently breathe in some patience and parenting confidence

Try to listen with curiosity to hear, not to reply.

Feeling heard is very close to feeling loved.

Consider, is what I am about to say kind and useful?
Am I responding, or have I allowed myself to be bounced into reacting?



See beyond the behaviour to your teen who needs you.

Teens often want to draw others into their drama. What they actually need is your balance.

Try 'I' instead of 'you' eg; 'I wonder if...' instead of 'you should...' to help regulate conversations.

Conflict is inevitable. Try to model the best way to cope with it.

REMEMBER: Tactical withdrawal from conflict is NOT submission

We are here to support, listen or advise anytime. Contact us Monday to Thursday 9am to 9pm. Friday 9am to 5pm and Saturday 9am to 1pm



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Struggling teens often lack confidence and have low self-worth. In spite of their 'bluff & bluster' they actually need praise, acknowledgement and proof of your unconditional love.

Separate who they are as a person, from what they say & do.

Try to....

- Search for the good
- Be available & interested
- Offer choices
- Respect their private space
- Facilitate all sports/hobbies
- Be predictable and fair
- Acknowledge all feelings
- Apologise if you need to



Try to....

- Remember your own needs
- Avoid Micro-managing
- Be non-judgemental
- Ask instead of assume
- Welcome their friends
- Keep rules to minimum
- Enjoy a common interest
- Provide treats & surprises

Encourage healthy risk-taking such as abseiling, bouldering, drama etc to create a safe buzz.

Encourage a feeling of acceptance. Teens often try to reject first to avoid their worst fear of being rejected.

Encourage choices and, as far as possible, allow for learning from natural consequences.



'Parenting the new teen in the age of anxiety' Dr John Duffy
'Blame my Brain: The amazing teen brain revealed' Nichola Morgan

Fear often makes us try to control situations and others. Remembering this can help us to understand teens' behaviours, and our own.



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