

Tips for Communicating with Your Teen

Curious Listening

Listen with curiosity. Try to understand your teen and really hear them. The value of listening cannot be overstated.

Questions

Ask open ended questions - not questions that start with the word *why*.

Yes

Say "Yes" to as many requests as is appropriate. Your agreeableness fosters the possibility that your teen is more likely to keep coming to you with their requests.

Hit the Highway

Sometimes the best place to have a hard conversation is while driving. Sitting side by side, without direct eye contact, can sometimes feel safer for your teen to share personal information.

Take a Time Out

Take time to calm yourself and let your teen calm down before having a difficult conversation or attempting to resolve a conflict.

Humor

Laughter is great medicine, so channel your inner comedian. Sometimes a well-timed funny or unexpected response can break the tension, especially when discussing potentially embarrassing information. Beware – an ill-timed joke can communicate disrespect or lack of understanding.

Sending a Text

Important conversations are better had in person. Resist the urge to send your message in a text.

Munchies

Who doesn't like eating their favorite meal or snack? Show up for the conversation with one of your teen's favorites. Eating together is known for helping build better relationships.

Compliments and Gratitude

Give your teen genuine compliments at every opportunity, and always say, "Thank You!" for the big and small stuff.