

Counselor Corner – November 2018



“10 Ways to Communicate With Your Teen”

Is it difficult to talk to your teen/tween? Do they roll their eyes or give you a blank stare when you talk to them? If so, you are not alone! Adolescence can be a bumpy ride for both parents and teens. However, it's important to always keep the lines of communication open. Here are some tips to help you communicate with your teen:

1. Make yourself available for talks and try to have them each day. Car rides can be a good opportunity for you to talk to your teen. At the same time, be respectful to your teen's need for silence.
2. Offer praise when deserved and remember to express your love, even if your teen acts like it doesn't matter. It does.
3. Show that you're paying attention: use good eye contact and ask for clarification if needed.
4. Be positive and encouraging, and choose words and concepts that teens understand.
5. Rather than jump to conclusions, give your teen a chance to explain thoughts and actions.
6. Ban communication-stoppers such as guilt, commands, ultimatums, preaching, judging, or words like “never” or “always”.
7. Be brief. Most teens tune out nagging, and retain shorter messages longer.
8. Practice win-win communication. A healthy compromise with both parties feeling like winners helps teens learn negotiation skills.
9. When the consequence of a conflict won't harm your teen, give him or her the opportunity to disagree without being accused of ‘talking back’. Your teen will gain self-respect.
10. Don't feel you have to know everything. It's OK to say, “I don't know, but let's find out together”.

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