

Speaker Notes

Parenting Teenagers

Page 1 – Title Slide

None

Page 2 - Objectives

None

Page 3 - Introduction

- Teens (especially younger teens) are old enough to think they can make their own decisions, but still too young to recognize their limitations.
- Development of reproductive sexuality: The time of onset varies greatly. If their bodies develop later than peers, they may need additional support from adults to improve feelings of comfort and self-worth regarding their body.
- Sexual feelings are new to teens, and they can easily confuse sexual feelings with genuine caring and intimacy. Set aside time to talk with them about this and/or recommend an age-appropriate book or website dealing with teen development.

Page 4 – Developmental Tasks

None

Page 5 – Teen Characteristics

None

Page 6 – Teen Characteristics (Continued)

None

Page 7 – The Parent’s Job

- Build the relationship: No discipline will be effective unless there is a positive relationship.
- Let them be who they are: Allow them to have their own ideas and opinions even if you don’t agree with them.

Page 8 – Maintaining Communication

- As teens are trying to separate, they can become more withdrawn from parents and communicate very little. This doesn’t mean they don’t need you or want your help—even if they don’t express it.
- Teens tend to think in black and white. Things are either “totally awesome and amazing!” or “unbelievably gross and horrible!”
- Teens sometimes initiate conflict simply to force you to interact with them. Insecurity is very high at this age, and they may think this is the only way to engage you in their feelings.

Page 9 – Maintaining Communication (Continued)

- Teens are often insecure, afraid of rejection and not comfortable expressing their feelings. It’s important to read between the lines. It will make your connection to your teen stronger.

Page 10 – Maintaining Communication (Continued)

- Written Communication: If talking is difficult or leads to further conflict, putting your thoughts and concerns in a note to your teen can facilitate further discussion. Make sure to state all the positive things you love about them before expressing concerns. A note will allow your teen to sit quietly and absorb what it is you have to say.

Page 11 – How to Discipline a Teen

- Rules provide stability: Having parents who set firm boundaries is actually reassuring to teens, even though they will probably not express it. Setting rules and consequences lets them know you care about them and are interested in their welfare. They need you to set limits they can't set for themselves.
- Age appropriate rules: Limits for 13 year olds are not suitable for 15 year olds.
- Have your teen participate: Having them help set rules and consequences gives them a sense of control and greatly reduces the number of arguments you'll have. The teen cannot then claim that punishments or expectations are unfair if they help set them. Parents can then take on the role of calmly enforcing the pre-arranged consequences.
- Be consistent: Make sure you set limits and consequences that you are going to enforce. Teens need to know that you mean what you say.

Page 12 – How to Discipline a Teen (Continued)

- Set consequences quickly completed: Give teen another chance.
 - Example: "You came home very late after we agreed on a time, so tomorrow I will pick you up," or "Tomorrow you will have to stay home."
- Establish trust: This is an important part of your relationship. Trust has to be earned by both of you.
- Natural and logical consequences: Experiencing the consequences of their choices teaches self-discipline. (These will be discussed on the next slides)

Page 13 – How to Discipline a Teen (Continued)

- Example of a natural consequence: The teen is supposed to do their own laundry. They don't do it. They have no clean clothes to wear to school. (The consequence is not imposed by the parent, as the teen and parent have a prior understanding that the teen will take care of their own clothes.)

Page 14 – How to Discipline a Teen (Continued)

- Example of a logical consequence: The teen wrecks the car. The teen loses car privileges for a set period of time (imposed by the parent).

Page 15 – Teens and Deployment

None

Page 16 – Teens and Deployment (Continued)

None

Page 17 – Teens and Deployment (Continued)

None

Page 18 – Teens and Deployment (Continued)

None

Page 19 – Teens and Deployment (Continued)

None

Page 20 – Positive Aspects of Deployment

- Sometimes parents and children can actually get to know each other better through correspondence. Sometimes it feels safer to write about feelings than it does to talk about them.

Page 21 – Tips for Surviving the Teen Years

- Your teen is not an adult: Even though they may look like one, they are still developing into adulthood and need room to explore themselves and their world.
- Be honest: Teens are curious and wanting information. If you don't answer them honestly, they will usually find out the truth one way or another. This hurts your credibility with them.
- Pick your battles: Remember it's the adolescent's developmental task to challenge and question rules. They are trying to separate and become their own person. The way they wear their hair is not as important as if they are going to have sex or use drugs. When an issue comes up, ask, "Is this crucial to my child's safety and wellbeing?"
- Use humor: Teens still know how to have fun and be silly. Relax, laugh and joke with them as much as possible. However, make sure you are laughing with them and not at them. Remember teens are very sensitive and their moods can change quickly and without warning. Try to follow their lead.
- Don't take your teen's behavior or reactions personally: It's not about you, it's about the changes they are going through.

Page 22 – Tips for Surviving (Continued)

- Try to remember what it was like to be a teen: It helps with your understanding to put yourself in their place and remember the challenges you faced at their stage in life.
- Expect that things won't go according to plan: It is normal for teens to test the limits.
- Be generous when teen is under stress: For example, a romance break-up or exams at school. Make allowances for some of their behavior (within limits) when you know they are having a hard time. Don't take it personally. Let them know that you realize things are difficult.

Page 23 – When to Seek Help

None

Page 24 – Taking Care of Yourself

None

Page 25 – Summary

None

Page 26 - Questions

None

Page 27 - Resources
None

Page 28 – Thank You
None

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