

# A Survival Guide for Parents of Tween & Teens

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Tips to help parents cultivate a respectful, strong connection with their teens and strategies to help parents understand their teens and learn to rise above.

**Anticipate and prepare:** Prevention is all about anticipation. If you are prepared in advance, then when dilemmas and complicated situations involving your son/daughter come up, you will be ready, equipped and able to respond.

**Educate and inform:** Keep up to date on current developments in teen culture. Educating yourself is a big part of being proactive and protective.

**Make your teen part of the solution:** Ask her to help create the guidelines and routines that will affect her life, whether it's coming up with a new reasonable curfew, healthy nighttime sleeping parameters, or working on finding ways of healthy parent-teen self-expression and communication by working on taking ownership and responsibility for how you both treat each other.

**Set up reasonable parameters and guidelines:** Eliminate any hard and fast rules. The guidelines you set must come from a place of love, not fear or control, and be fluid enough to respond to most situations you and your teen may encounter. Age appropriate expectations are the key! Be realistic. Don't impose limits and restrictions he can't handle or expect him to be an adult.

**Pick the right times to talk:** Take a few cleansing breaths before speaking or wait a few hours (or days!), especially if you are furious and about to scream and yell. Practice talking out loud to yourself until you can talk calmly. You'll be more likely to get through to him if you can speak with composure, logic, and a clear sense of what you want him to understand.

**Keep it short and simple, and humorous (if possible):** Make your point quickly and clearly and stay focused on your message. Less is more when talking to a teenager. Don't take yourself too seriously. Laughter can lighten the heaviest of conversations.

**No punishment:** Punishment simply does not work with tweens and teens the way you want it to. If your son or daughter is afraid of getting punished, he/she won't ask for help and guidance when it's needed most.



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