

Top 10 Q & A for the 3 major age groups with children



Toddlers; According to Dr. Brian Orr

1. How do I treat a fever?

A fever only means a child is ill. Fevers do not hurt kids. Therefore, you really don't have to treat a fever. Nevertheless, it is generally accepted to try to comfort your child by bringing the temperature down. Using the appropriate dose of Tylenol or Motrin can accomplish that.

A fever means a child is ill. But what he or she is ill with depends on other symptoms. How much a parent has to worry about a temperature depends on how old the child is and what other symptoms the child has. Those are things to discuss with your doctor.

2. How is my child growing? What are the percentiles?

Today every parent is concerned about percentiles. It seems like it is a matter of pride to have your child on the higher percentiles. In fact, consistent balanced growth is more important even at lower percentiles. Provided with a good balanced diet our children grow well even if your child is thin; there usually is no cause for concern. If you grew up on the lean side, chances are your child will too. It is probably more important to worry about a balanced diet than it is to worry about percentiles.

3. Why won't my child eat?

Children do eat and they eat enough to grow on. They slow down in their growth after 1 year of age. The quantity of food they eat slows down too. That's when they get "picky." Even picky kids grow. They might as well grow on the good food you choose - not on what they choose.

4. What do I do about tantrums?

Tantrums occur when children don't get their way. You said "no" to something and so they react. The best thing to do for tantrums is nothing! Tantrums will fade away if you don't let them control you. So let them fade away.

5. How do I get my child to sleep all night?

Sleeping all night is really waking and falling back to sleep, on their own. This ability is taught. If children learn to sleep with associations such as feedings, rocking, or co-sleeping, they never learn to wake and fall asleep again on their own.

6. Should I worry about these lumps on the back on my child's neck or under her jaw?

Children get lumps from their growing lymph nodes. These grow to fight infection and get sore. But they do go down again. Unless a lump keeps growing or gets red, you probably don't need to worry about it.

7. What about these bumps and bruises - especially on the head?

Kids are always bumping their heads. Some look like unicorns for a while with a bump in the middle of their foreheads. Bumps and bruises are part of childhood - even on the head. If a head injury is severe enough there usually is a loss of consciousness or some vomiting. Those symptoms signal that it is more than a bump on the head.

8. Is my child developing well?

Many mothers have a good sense of whether their child is developing well. Nobody has to worry about timing of any one milestone such as rolling or crawling. So long as your child is progressing and doing more skillful actions each month you are likely in good shape. Of course, check with your pediatrician if you have doubts.

9. My child won't listen.

All our children won't listen unless we train them to. Most parents rely on multiple calls with increasing loudness to make their kids "listen." Parents need to stop that and adopt a new approach. One word, then act. Call them for dinner once. If there is no response go get them calmly. Over time with the "one word, then act" approach they will learn that you mean it by your "one word."

10. What should I use for cold symptoms?

The only reason we have a million cold medicines is that none truly work. Tylenol, liquids, a

vaporizer and limited cold medication use are still the only treatments available to use. Don't worry too much unless high fevers or symptoms worsen. Then see your doctor.

For some great books full of advice, dedicated to helping parents with toddlers, check out: [Parenting Toddlers Today](#)

Preteens:

10: Moderate Media Exposure

Depending on your age, this is likely something your parents didn't have to deal with as much as parents of today. There's no going back to the days when the only worry was what was on the radio. Preteens have access to a number of entertainment media: television, video games, the Internet, music and movies.

A common suggestion among professionals is to monitor and moderate media exposure for your preteen. This means understanding the ratings systems -- such as the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) for video games and the MPAA for movies -- in addition to keeping an eye on their media consumption. Many parents use a rewards system to keep track of how much their child uses such media. For instance, they may decide their child can play two hours of video games for every three hours he does homework.

It's important to find a system and stick with it across the board -- no exceptions for the finale of their favorite show or if they get to the top level of a video game at the end of their time limit. Standing by these rules establishes your boundaries and also teaches good time management skills to preteens.

9: Prepare Them for Peer Pressure

Peer pressure becomes even more prevalent at the preteen age, so having regular, open talks with your child can help him maintain his self-esteem.

There is no way around it: When your child gets to the preteen age, he's going to be dealing with a number of social pressures. These come from both the inside and out, as children struggle to define themselves and control how they are viewed by others.

Have a conversation with your child early on in his life regarding peer pressure. To an adult, it might sound a bit clichéd to have a talk about thinking for yourself or not letting others get to you, but preteens will often seek approval from peers, even ones they're not particularly fond of. This can lead to dangerous situations regarding sex, violence, drugs or alcohol, so it's

important to talk to your child often and early.

Ensuring your child's self-esteem stays and that his identity is solid can help him deal with peer pressures, but don't lay it on too thick. After all, parent's compliments can only go so far with a preteen.

8: Develop Trust

For better or worse, the preteen era marks the time when parents and children begin to disconnect a bit. This can lead to trust issues for both parties.

It might sound silly considering you've lived with your child her entire life, but once she hits the preteen age, you'll possibly need to reestablish your trust with her. This can come by a variety of methods, but allowing a bit of leeway -- in something like hanging out with friends, for example -- can enable your relationship with your preteen to grow and strengthen.

It's important to keep an open line of communication and to remain actively involved in your child's life. There are many ways you can do this, but be sure to keep yourself available during meals, games and other family activities. Maintain these family moments throughout the preteen years and make sure your child understands she can always come to you with any type of question or quarrel.

This will also be a time when you may feel it necessary to do some research about your child on your own. Although it's important to keep tabs on where you child is and what she's doing, many parenting experts believe that you should respect your child's privacy until she gives you a good reason to suspect she is using poor judgment in an important area of her life [source: Peters]. Although snooping on your child might seem like a good idea, it's generally best to begin allowing him to have his first taste of independence.

7: Leave Them Home Alone When They're Ready

You can give your teen trial runs to see whether she is ready to stay home alone for an evening.

One of the greatest signs of trust between a parent and a child comes from the first time you leave him home alone. Although different children will react in different ways, there are ways to tell whether your child may be ready to take on the head of the house role -- temporarily, at least.

Start by leaving him for short durations. Run to the store to grab groceries, for example, and see how you and he handle it. If he remains calm and collected, he'll probably soon be ready to stay alone for longer periods.

If you decide it's OK to give him the evening to himself, be sure to call and check in often and provide him with a phone number to reach you. You'll also want to ensure your child has access to neighbors or close relatives in case you can't be reached -- or in case you want someone to drop by to check on him. The first time you leave him home alone, you'll want to run through a few safety measures, such as who to call in case of an emergency, what to do in case of a fire, and which appliances are off-limits.

Make sure he understands that you're still ruling the house by proxy. This means all the same considerations of TV watching, computer usage, video game playing and eating are all set in stone. If these rules and boundaries are breached, make him understand there will be consequences.

6: Punish Them Effectively

A growing trend among punishments for preteens these days is to get creative. Instead of simply grounding your child or taking away a privilege, some parents incorporate the reason for the punishment inside the punishment itself. For example, you could remove the hinges of your child's door (or the door itself) if she is constantly slamming it. This can be a great way to teach lessons.

However, it's still important to follow a few simple guidelines. With preteens, be very clear with your rules, expectations and limitations. Cognitively, a preteen is beginning to understand the structure of sentences and ways to manipulate them to find loopholes, so speaking plainly with a clear message is important.

Many believe positive reinforcement of rules works the best. This means that when your child does something wrong, you talk about what she should instead be doing, as opposed to simply telling her "don't." Children can understand cause and effect, so pointing out what behavior they should be using and why can sometimes be more effective than simply telling them to stop.

As with children of any age range, being patient and consistent with punishments for preteens is key. Stick with the rules you set, and be ready and able to handle your child in a calm and collected tone if she breaks those rules.

5: Ease the Transition into Middle School

Your child's middle school course work will likely be more difficult than what she is used to, so she may need your help at first.

You might not remember your own experience very well, but the transition into middle school

can be a terrifying experience for a child. In many schools, this will mean a more open class structure or having to use lockers and get to classes on time.

Before the term starts, you should attend a tour of the school with your child. You'll be able to learn about scheduled break times, find classrooms and start organizing a routine. If he is taking a new bus to school, it might be helpful to walk the route with him and help him memorize the bus number.

It's not all logistics, though. Your child will be getting used to new and different peers in addition to dealing with a wide range of new courses and material. Also, he'll likely find himself with more social demands and having to balance complex homework assignments. As a parent, you should be involved: Make sure you've met the teachers and that you have access to a course guide so you know what to expect throughout the year. Doing so will help you help your child as he finds his way among new friends, group homework projects and new obligations.

4: Teach Good Learning Skills

It's easier said than done when it comes to teaching good learning skills. However, by the time your child has reached the preteen age, it should be more apparent which type of learner your child is. As school systems become more populated and teacher-to-student ratios drop, it helps for parents to figure out the type of learner their child is and help her develop her skills.

Different people learn different ways, so try various methods of studying a lesson to determine how your child learns best. She may intake new knowledge best by listening to a lecture, reading the material or practicing the theories. Once you know which method works best, encourage her to use those approaches when studying and completing assignments. In addition, be sure to point out how the concepts and ideas she's studying correlate to the world, and try to make connections to everyday events when possible.

As with everything else, remain positive and attentive to her needs. There is nothing wrong with being one particular type of learner, and recognizing your child's strengths early on will help her throughout her academic career.

3: Encourage Hobbies and Extracurricular Activities

Encouraging your preteen to explore different hobbies will help him to develop his interests and boost his self-esteem.

Without proper guidance, parents will hear their child utter the words "I'm bored" far too often. As your child begins to come into his own, he'll begin looking for new ways to spend time and energy outside of his schoolwork. While many parents are likely to push for a child's hobby to be reading, keep his own desires in mind while still teaching him life skills.

Whether it's music, video games, movies, art, sports or something else entirely, the cost of hobbies and extracurricular activities can be stressful. You'll worry whether it's worthwhile to purchase a brand new violin if your child doesn't end up playing it, and that's OK. Instead of buying it, you can simply rent one as a reliable and less expensive way to develop your child's interests.

If your preteen is struggling to find a hobby you consider useful, you might try offering a few suggestions. For instance, if he's interested in movies, pick up a cheap digital camcorder so he can try out his filmmaking skills. If he's interested in video games, introduce him to child-friendly programming software.

Keep your intentions and your child's interests in mind while helping him select extracurricular activities and hobbies. In theory, you can find ways to combine the two into something your preteen will benefit from and enjoy.

2: Talk About and Monitor Their Nutrition

Preteens are at an age when they start to strike out on their own, and it may be difficult to keep track of what they're eating. But you still maintain the decisions of what food to keep in your home, so keep your cupboards stocked with healthy foods.

As they begin to decide on their own what they want to eat, you can teach them techniques for healthy eating, such as the following:

- * Calcium is key for growing children, and it's easy to get from sources such as dairy products, leafy vegetables, salmon, broccoli and tofu.
- * Watch caloric intake. Preteens are going to have drastically different calorie needs as they get older: Boys need about 1600-2400 calories and girls need about 1400-2200, depending on how active they are.
- * Whole grains and brown rice are more nutritious than their white counterparts.
- * Iron-rich foods are important, especially as males begin developing muscle mass and females begin menstruating.
- * Drink plenty of water. Preteens need just as much water as adults.
- * Ditch the junk food. You've heard this one over and over yourself, so there's no reason to have your child eating it either.

[sources: Department of Agriculture, Lancaster General]

The preteen years are also riddled with growth spurts and weight changes, so be wary but non-confrontational if your child begins gaining or losing weight. However, if the weight changes become an issue, speak with him immediately regarding eating disorders or exercise.

1: Help with Health and Hygiene

Braces are common at the preteen age, so good dental hygiene is especially important during this time.

Health and hygiene are two pieces of the preteen puzzle that will become even more important as your child grows. With the onset of puberty, things will start to change, and you'll want to be aware of the following:

- * **Exercise:** Teach simple methods of exercise, such as walking up stairs or parking farther away from the entrance in parking lots. Children ages 6 to 17 need at least an hour of moderate exercise a day [source: Mayo Clinic].

- * **Bathing:** Bathing, hair washing and facial cleansing are all important. Many preteens are going to experience pimples and breakouts, so educate here as well.

- * **Mouth care:** Brushing teeth, flossing and using mouthwash are key to preserving all the time and money you've invested at the dentist.

- * **Antiperspirant/deodorant:** This will become even more important as their hormones become more active and sweating increases.

- * **Shaving:** Although boys may not be ready to tackle this one yet, girls may be ready to start shaving. Be ready to teach them how to do so safely.

- * **Menstruation:** This will come with a slew of different health and hygiene considerations, so be prepared to offer answers to a variety of questions.

- * **Sex:** Preteens might be more in the know than they seem, so talk about sex as soon as you feel they can understand it.

If you establish rules early, your preteens may take on many of these tasks naturally. As with all these tips, remain positive and supportive when your preteen does things right.

For some great books full of advice, dedicated to helping parents with PreTeens, check out: [How To Improve Your Childs Behavior](#)

Teens:

10: Develop Mutual Trust

Trust and Lies

Your teenager lied. It's perfectly acceptable to communicate your outrage -- but before you launch into a filibuster-style lecture, ask a few questions. Uncovering the "why" behind the lie paves the way for honesty. It's also an ideal time to establish a few simple rules. For example, tell your teen that if she gets into a sticky situation at a party, you will pick up her without complaining if she just calls or texts you to let you know. Then stick to your end of the bargain: Retrieve your teen from the party, no complaining allowed.

If your teenager suddenly becomes forgetful when asked details about friends or school, don't fret. Despite the mumbled, monosyllabic answers, your teen wants -- and needs -- to connect with you.

Sometimes your teen needs you to temporarily step away from your management role and begin to act more as a consultant. Embracing your new position will pave the way for mutual trust. Sure, you'll still set limits for your teen, but you'll also do a lot of listening. Even if the truth is not easy to hear, your job is to stay calm. Why? If you freak out, your teen will clam up and you won't gain valuable information for future decisions. For example, if three months earlier your teen admitted her friend missed curfew by four hours, you'll know that you should monitor any sleepovers at this friend's house.

The subtleties behind your parenting strategy should be paired with clearly communicated ground rules. Clear boundaries build trust and make transitions easier -- whether it's from middle to high school or from high school to college. When a teenager is the product of a consistent, calm and disciplined environment, it breeds security, self-esteem and good decision-making. The byproduct of these qualities is trust.

Rest assured, your teen will probably violate your trust at some point. But keep it in perspective. A lie or two doesn't necessarily indicate a crisis and shouldn't be extrapolated into a pattern for adulthood. Teens live (and make their mistakes) in the moment.

9. Teach Dollars and Sense

Equip your teenager with financial skills and you'll be ahead of the curve. A 2008 survey among high school students revealed decade-low scores for financial literacy [source: PACFL].

Many teenagers have lofty financial expectations, such as thinking they'll earn six-figure incomes the moment they graduate. However, the survey showed that only 26 percent even understand how credit card fees work. Even fewer teens know whether using a high-fee check-cashing service is a good idea [source: PACFL].

This lack of financial know-how, when paired with unrealistic earning expectations, is a recipe for debt. But you can head off trouble with some smart tactics. For example, pay household bills with your teen -- he may be shocked to discover the impact of property taxes. You could also give him \$50, a sizable grocery list and instructions not to overspend. He'll discover cost-saving store brands and other ways to best use the money.

If your teen has a part-time job, budgeting should be a natural progression. If you've decided your teen should forgo a job to concentrate on school, you may want to offer a base allowance with the option to earn additional income for extra projects [source: Kristof].

When a teen handles money, it teaches two valuable skills: budgeting for the future and identifying "needs" -- a concept that gets murky when it comes to concert tickets and designer jeans. Remember, it's OK if your teen's priorities are different than yours, but he should develop a spending plan. It will help him understand he can get expensive things -- if he's willing to save over time.

8: Embrace Technology

A cell phone can help you stay in touch with your teen, but you should still monitor how and when it's being used.

There are many good reasons to provide your teenager with a mobile telephone. For starters, it can help you stay connected. It's easier to text your child at 10 a.m. than it is to track down her whereabouts by calling all her friends' parents. If your teenager is now able to drive, she can call when she reaches her destination. In these and other ways, mobile telephones offer a sense of security.

But before you begin to rest easy, make sure you enact some safety measures. Teenagers have a firm grasp of technology: They can set passwords on their phones so you can't access their texts or e-mails. And because teens usually keep their phones within arm's reach, you may never realize your child is getting texts or phone calls in the middle of the night.

Remember, it's OK to insist that you know your teen's passwords. Plus, many cell phone providers offer parental controls that can set limits, so you could decide that your teen's phone can't send or receive texts or calls past 9 p.m. on a school night.

With technology comes responsibility, and teens don't always understand the ramifications of impulsive actions. Take the time to discuss online safety, such as why it's not a good idea to send an explicit message or photo or to befriend people your teen doesn't know in real life.

7: Track, but Don't Spy

The idea of activating a Global Positioning System tracker in your teen's cell phone may have you giddy with excitement. No more worries about where exactly your teen is spending his time when he's not under your roof.

Unfortunately, this "electronic umbilical cord" is all too easy to sever. Teenagers are quite adept at manipulating technology, especially when it allows them to assert more independence. Although it's certainly not a foolproof plan, your teen could simply leave his phone at a friend's house while enjoying a night out on the town.

The truth is that technology cannot compensate for good judgment. This is all the more reason to build a foundation of mutual trust with your teenager, while at the same time encouraging transparency. As a parent, you should know your child's passwords, for his phone and for any associated e-mail accounts or social media sites such as Facebook. Assure your teen that you're not going to play Sherlock Holmes; these are simply non-negotiable safety measures.

In addition, remind your teen not to share his passwords, even with a best friend. Talk about the bad situations that can arise from sharing passwords. Because teenagers live in the moment, it can be useful to point out the potential ramifications of seemingly innocent events. It also helps your teenager build self-confidence.

6: Cultivate Interests, Ease Peer Pressure

Let your teenager try out different activities -- such as sports, music or art -- so she can explore her interests and discover her strengths.

The best way to combat peer pressure? Help your teen cultivate his interests. A teen with a strong sense of self is more likely to make the right decision in difficult, pressured moments. Conversely, if a teen has low self-esteem, he is more likely to change his behavior to please others -- even if it means lowering his standards in a dangerous or unhealthy way.

Even if your teen isn't the outgoing type who eagerly pursues his interests, you can put him on

the right path. Teens that have a history of getting into trouble should be encouraged to get involved in structured recreational and creative activities such as common-interest clubs.

A good rule of thumb is that your teen should be involved in at least one group, sport or club each semester of high school. Why is this so important in warding off peer pressure? Time spent doing these activities is time not spent getting into trouble with peers. Plus, these activities help teens discover their passions and, in large part, pressure-proof their identities.

If you'd really like to give your teen some perspective, consider an extended vacation -- even if it's during the school year. With a bit of planning, assignments can be coordinated with destinations. For example, a history lecture may soon be forgotten, but a walk through the Coliseum in Rome likely will not. In addition to bonding as a family, your teen will get a break -- and some perspective -- on teen pressures.

5: Say 'No' to the Fashion Police

It's a fine line: You don't want to control your teen's every fashion move, but then again, sometimes you do.

Teens are especially willing to explore changes to their clothing or appearance, often in response to -- or against -- peer pressure. Your role is to guide your teen's choices, without becoming the fashion police.

Begin by doing a little soul-searching. If you don't want your teenager to wear clothing you consider "odd," then figure out why you feel this way. If your teen is selecting her clothing for it's "barely there" fabrics, then it's time to institute a family dress code. On the other hand, some experts recommend that if you don't like your teen's fashion sense simply because you think it reflects poorly on you or your family as a whole, you should consider making a few compromises.

Why should you consider this more hands-off approach? The clothing choices made by teenagers are closely bound to their self-concepts, so they use fashion as a means of self-expression. If you've ever noticed your teenager wearing certain styles to fit a theme (like donning a sweatshirt and distressed blue jeans to watch a basketball game), it's their way of feeling more confident and capable in varied situations. Clothing is an essential social tool for teenagers. Wearing varied styles helps a teen "try on" different aspect of her personality. It's not much different from dating, as we explain next.

4: Your Teen Should Date Mr./Ms. 'Right Now'

After-School Special

For many teenagers, the witching hour isn't at midnight. It's after school. If your teen is home alone until you return from work, check out these statistics: According to the academic journal *Pediatrics*, teens are more likely to have sex during this loosely supervised time.

Many parents can attest that their children have had "girlfriends" or "boyfriends" since the second grade. But during the teenage years, dating takes on a whole new meaning.

Before your teen begins to date, discuss a few expectations. The guidelines you establish now could have a long-standing impact on behavior that stretches well into adulthood. For example, high school juniors and seniors who have a serious romantic relationship are 50 percent more likely to get married or live with their partner before age 25. Depending on their beliefs and their child's maturity, some parents prefer for their teens not to have such serious relationships at a young age. Many experts recommend encouraging your teenager to date Mr. or Ms. "Right Now" -- as opposed to a more serious relationship -- in hopes that she will continue to develop friendships and lighthearted dating relationships for a longer period of time before "settling down".

In addition to talking openly about sexual pressures and limits, talk about the boy/girl roles that sometimes play out in teenage relationships. Physical, emotional and verbal abuse by dating partners is a very real concern. Help your teen understand the warning signs.

A power imbalance also can come into play as your teen makes plans for the future. Talk with your teen about college and what he may choose for a career. It doesn't matter if you don't come up with any solid answers, as long as your teen understands that his decision should be made independently.

3: Curfews Build Confidence

Curfews are important for obvious reasons. Not only do they allow parents to get a little sleep, but they also protect teenagers from the dangers that seem to occur more frequently after midnight.

Although teenagers typically dislike time limits and will sometimes ignore them, curfews are still a "must have" rule. Curfews set boundaries, build confidence and reinforce a culture of respect within your family.

Rather than setting a relatively random time for your teen's curfew, get them involved. This is one household limit that will work better if it is realistic and based on your teen's input.

Even if you jointly decide on an 11 p.m. curfew, it's OK to compromise if your teen occasionally has a good reason to ask for an extension. Ideally, this compromise should be made ahead of time. If your teen calls 30 minutes before her curfew's up and begs to spend the night at a friend's house, there may be trouble afloat.

If your teenager does come home past curfew without permission, give her the chance to explain. Sometimes it will make sense; other times it won't. Either way, help her figure out what she could do differently next time. Even if she has a plausible reason, there should be a consequence. Decide in advance if you will restrict driving privileges, turn off texting or ban the TV. If alcohol or drugs are involved, the severity of consequences should be more serious.

Communicating with your teen about limits is good practice for putting them behind the wheel. Find out why next.

2: Encourage Drive Time

Keeping a Virtual Eye on Teen Drivers

You've taught your teen to do the right thing, but even one mistake may have fatal consequences. Now parents can monitor what a teen is doing behind the wheel. GPS-compatible software makes it possible to record vehicle speeds and distances, and you can receive a notification when your teen drives too fast or too far. After-market alcohol detectors kill ignitions if a driver has been drinking; these systems include commonly used "breathalyzer" technology or steering wheel sensors that detect alcohol through the skin. [source: Geico]

In the United States, vehicle crashes are the main single cause of teenage deaths [source: NHTSA].

Learning safe driving skills could save a teen's life. In many states, before being issued a learner's permit, teenagers are required to take a driver's education course that combines classroom and driving time. If there isn't a driver's education program nearby, you can order instructional DVDs, streaming videos and mock testing materials online [source: Teen Driving Course].

If you've decided to teach your teen how to drive, he should ride shotgun and narrate all your actions. Then, tell your teen to do the same from behind the wheel. Narrating actions as they happen -- like "checking rearview mirror" or "activating left turn signal 200 yards (182 meters) before intersection" -- ingrain the driving process. Your teen is creating a collection of automatic responses, much like an athlete creates "muscle memory" by practicing the same moves again and again [source: Kuczmariski].

Teaching your teen basic mechanics may save you money. A teenager who understands an engine needs oil to operate is less likely to drive around with flashing warning indicators. Your teen should also know how to change a tire (not just in theory, but in practice).

Increase your teen's survival odds by enacting a strict "don't call/don't text" policy during drive time and by insisting stereo levels stay low enough to hear ambient traffic noise. You

should limit the number of ride-alongs, too; the risk of fatal injury for teenage drivers increases with each passenger [source: Chen].

1: Save Your Breath

If your teenager breaks a house rule, gets a D in geometry or saunters in two hours after curfew, chances are you're going to feel like yelling -- or launching into a long-winded lecture at the very least.

Your child doesn't really learn much from these moments, at least not anything good. What they do discover is that if they push your buttons you'll lose control. And now they know exactly what will put you over the edge.

When you yell or lecture, your child also learns how to tune you out. This happens in one of two ways: Your teen stops paying attention (even if you're 5 inches from his face) or he starts screaming right back. The result? No one is listening and, more than likely, this behavior is bound to repeat.

Try a strategy that gets more meaningful results. Plant a positive look on your face, and keep it there. Even when you're not happy with something your teen has -- or hasn't -- done. It may sound simple, but it sets the tone for the entire exchange. Keep your voice low, and listen more than you talk.

When you exact discipline, try to focus on meaningful consequences that are relative to the size of the rule that was broken. In general, the penalty for not taking out the trash should be less severe than the penalty for borrowing your car without permission.

If you do find yourself in a shouting match, stop immediately. Explain that you don't like what is happening and leave the room to cool off. In this moment, you're teaching a coping skill. And that's really the point of parenting a teenager. Your goal is to equip your teenager with strategies he will successfully use the rest of his life.

For some great books full of advice, dedicated to helping parents with Teens, check out: [Help With Your Teens](#)

I have gathered this material from various sources on the internet and put it all together for you here,. Thank you for reading, hope this has been helpful. Feel free to check out [Family ABC's](#) for more advice articles, activity ideas and a great family mall all in one place.

P.S. Also have some great free stuff for everybody.

Dr. G

