



Setting Limits For My Teenager

As parents, we expect to keep a close eye on our infants and young children to care for them and keep them safe. As our children grow into teenagers, they gain a great deal of independence. That is a normal part of growing up. So, it's easy for us to believe that there is less need to pay close attention to our teens. But in order to keep them healthy, we must still keep tabs on them, set rules, and help them learn how to protect themselves.

Setting Boundaries:

Many teenagers resist when we want to know what they're doing because they are at a stage in life when independence becomes very important to them. But most teens will listen to their parents and try to stick to the rules if they have a strong relationship.

No matter what our parenting style, it's helpful to avoid the extremes. Involve your teenager in setting rules for themselves. They will be more likely to respect the rules, feel respected, and respect you as parents if they understand the reasons behind the rules and get to negotiate with us about them.

How to Set Boundaries:

All parents can adopt some specific parenting practices that will help keep our teens healthy and reduce the chances of them being involved in risky behaviours.

- As much as possible, try to have an adult at home when teens are at home. This could be a parent, a neighbour, or another family member. When it's not possible for an adult to be present, we can make sure we touch base with our teens frequently while they are alone by phone or text.
- Encourage teens to get involved in activities where an adult will be around — like afterschool clubs or sports.
- When teens go to parties, make sure there will be an adult there. Call the parents of the teenager who is having the party. Even offer to help supervise the party.



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- Support teens spending time with friends who are good influences. Encourage them to have a number of friends.
- Know our teens' friends. Take the time to talk with your teenager and their friends about what makes a good relationship.
- Talk with other parents. Get to know the parents of your teenager's friends and stay in touch with them.
- Keep track of your teens online. It's important to set clear expectations about internet and mobile phone use and online communication, and to talk with teenagers about how they spend time online.
- Be available. It's important to make sure teenagers know how to contact you at any time.

<http://www.plannedparenthood.org/parents/keeping-teens-healthy-setting-boundaries-38006.htm>