

5 Mistakes Parents Make With Teens

According to WebMD, here are the top mistakes parents make with their teens:

1. Expecting the Worst

It could become a self-fulfilling prophecy: Negative expectations can actually promote the behavior you fear most. A Wake Forest University study showed that teens whose parents expected them to get involved in risky behaviors reported higher levels of these behaviors one year later. Focus on your child's interests and hobbies, even if you don't understand them. You could open a new path of communication, reconnect with the child you love, and learn something new.

2. Reading Too Many Parenting Books

Rather than trusting their instincts, many parents turn to outside experts for advice on how to raise their teens. It's not that parenting books are bad. Use books to get perspective on confusing behavior -- and then put the book down and trust that you've learned what you need to learn.

3. Sweating the Small Stuff

If it's not putting your child at risk, give her the leeway to make age-appropriate decisions and learn from the consequences of her choices. A lot of parents don't want growing up to involve any pain, disappointment, or failure, but protecting your child from the realities of life takes away valuable learning opportunities -- before they're out on their own.

4. Ignoring the Big Stuff

If you suspect your child is using alcohol or drugs, do not look the other way. Parents might consider teen drinking a rite of passage because they drank when they were that age. But the stakes are higher now. Safeguard all the medicines you have: Know which products are in your home and how much medication is in each package or bottle.

5. Too Much, or Too Little, Discipline

Find a balance between obedience and freedom. Teens raised in rigid environments miss out on the chance to develop problem-solving or leadership skills -- because you're making the decisions for them. Yet too little discipline doesn't help, either. Teens and tweens need clear structure and rules to live by as they start to explore the world outside.

Remember, parent influence runs deeper than you may think. Most teens say they want to spend more time with their parents. Keep making time for your child throughout the tween and teen years. Even when it doesn't show, you provide the solid ground they know they can always come home to.

Q: Which of these 5 mistakes do you resonate with most?

In addition, some of the common teenage problems that teenagers face today are usually related to:

- Self-Esteem and Body Image
- Stress
- Bullying
- Depression
- Cyber Addiction
- Drinking and Smoking
- Teen Pregnancy
- Underage Sex
- Defiant behaviors
- Peer-pressure and competition

It is crucial that teens feel validated in their feelings and thoughts because what they are going through is a real part of their lives. Parents and guardians should not judge or criticize their feelings or thoughts. Being sensitive towards teens and the fact that they are exposed to a range of emotions (puberty being one of the most important experiences) is an important step in understanding their transition. Anger, confusion, jealousy, non-compliant attitudes, dislike towards their parents or elders, secrecy/high need for privacy etc. are few examples of emotions or feelings they have. Defiant behaviors result from their inability to appropriately deal with the intensity of these emotions and aggravate common teenage problems.