

## Tips for Working Parents: Teenagers



As children get older, they become more independent. They are more influenced by new people and ideas in school, and in the world. Letting go will be easier for you and your child if you can talk freely about the changes your child is going through. You can't keep your child under your wing forever. But you can keep the lines of communication open.

### Teenagers: 13 to 19 years

Teens are trying to figure out who they are. And they may try on a few different identities while doing so. This can mean changing their appearance. You may find some of these new looks a little odd. But these new looks are often short-term and quite harmless. Giving teens control of their own appearance can be very empowering. Your best bet is to sit back and remember how it was when you were a teen. It can also help to talk with other parents of teens.

### If you're having trouble talking



Parents worry about their teens experimenting with drinking, driving, smoking, sex, drugs, and staying out late. But many parents have trouble talking to their kids about these things. Some parents avoid these topics. As a result, they don't really know what their kids are doing.

Be available when your teen wants to talk, no matter how tired or busy you are. They may not feel like talking later. Let teens know where you stand by setting limits and sticking to them. Be clear about things like what time they must be home. And be sure teens know what the consequences will be if they test those limits or break the rules.

### Beyond child care

Once your child is a teen, you don't worry about another person providing care. Your concern now is whether your teen is taking good care of themselves and making good choices. It's often helpful for young people in this age group to have organized, supervised activities they can enjoy with their friends.

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