

Should You Argue with your Teen?

Teens love to argue just for the sake of arguing. I remember when I was young, I loved to argue just for the sake of disagreeing. Teens are learning to think logically and they feel the need to argue to sort things for themselves.

You as a parent are going to be the number one target. You have been the dominant figure in your child's life and your teachings and established ways are naturally going to be challenged as they think through what they have been taught.

Exercise your teen's new found interest in logical thinking by asking challenging questions about politics, world events or even their Christian walk. They need to think about what they believe. You will find the two of you spending a lot less time arguing about issues such as how late to stay out on a date when the two of you are engaging in lively discussions about life in general.

Your teen needs to share opinions. Turn it into something constructive and positive by challenge. You will teach him to distinguish between argument as an exercise in logic and argument as an attempt at persuasion. You will truly gain a close relationship if done with respect and love.

Knowing Your Teen's Friends

Parents should take the time to meet and become well acquainted with their teenager's friends. Peers play an important role in the life of your teen. A good parent will know who is peering their teen.

A good parent will also study how his teen reacts around his peers. Is your teen a follower; the kind of person who has to behave and dress like the crowd? Don't misunderstand. All teens want to be like everyone else, but some follow the crowd even if it means doing wrong. We need to teach our children how to say, "No" and be able to leave a bad situation before

it goes too far. Teach your daughter that others will respect her if she does right even if it is not popular.

An extreme "follower" is very insecure. This insecurity can develop after her parents have separated, divorced, or fought. The amount of insecurity is determined by the intensity of the problem.

You can not make your teenager like a certain friend, but you can teach her what kind of friends she ought to have.

Your Teen Won't Take Your Advice?

As children grow they do not want or think they need your advice. Parent's responsibility doesn't fade just because children don't think they need advice.

If you have been challenged by your teen, find time when you can calmly discuss the issue at hand. Discuss a viable solution while giving him more freedom in the decision making. Your teen is maturing and with that comes a struggle between freedom and responsibility. At times you will have to let go and let failure come so your teen can learn from his mistake.

Make sure you are listening during these rebellious years. Rules that can be amended and made more flexible can be agreed upon by both of you. Don't disrupt the basic administration of your home. Rules such as dinnertime, church attendance and cleanliness should remain intact. These should be basic laws of the home which every family member obeys.

It is never too late to work on your relationship with your teen. It is easier when they are younger and more teachable. Anytime is the right time to do what is right.

A TEEN QUEST POWER SHEET

Parent/Teen Relationships

Do You Really Love Your Teen?

No one is ever taught how to be a successful parent in high school or college. There is very little taught about parenting but yet God places great responsibility on parents to rear their children. "Train up a child in the way He should go and when he is old he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6

God's plan for parents is to help develop and shape their children into His image. Satan is out to defeat you. He wants to stop this process. When we are good role models our children will follow that example. Children need to see parents who want to be like Jesus.

Not only are we examples but we must love, discipline, and teach. You see God is the perfect example of what a father should be. To be a good parent is to follow Christ's example.

The greatest of all commandments is to love. I John 4:8 says, "God is love". God realizes because we were born into sin we must receive the Savior, His Son, in order to practice love. I am convinced you really can not love your children without knowing God.

Do you really love your children? Some parents become bitter and build walls between their children and themselves. You must love unconditionally. God did not make us puppets nor do we make our children puppets. A good parent is one who leads by example to develop Christ's likeness . . . through love.

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6 Steps to a Happy Home

To experience a happy home, parents must express love. Here are six steps to a happy home.

1. **HUGS** - Just as little babies need to be cuddled, children of all ages need physical expression. Even teens need frequent hugs from parents and grandparents.
2. **SPEND TIME TOGETHER** - Family time together is so very important. The average father spends three minutes or less per day communicating to his child. Take a day off per week. Go on vacations. Make a point to block off at least thirty to ninety minutes each day just for your children.
3. **HAVE FUN TIMES TOGETHER** - When our sons were young, I would turn off the lights in our home and we would play Hide and Seek in the dark. As your children become older you can play more sophisticated games. Learn to laugh and enjoy each other.
4. **LISTEN TO YOUR CHILDREN** - Many children never talk to Mom or Dad because they just know their opinions and ideas really don't count. Make them count.
5. **ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILDREN** - Your children learn their basic self-image from your reaction in the home. Believe in your children.
6. **BE COURTEOUS TO YOUR CHILDREN** I know so many parents who are rude and impolite to their children. Knock before you enter their bedroom.

A happy home takes lots of work. . . and lots of prayer.

There is a Difference Between Flattery and Compliments

Teens are so unsure of themselves. Their looks and their place in the mainstream of life are of utmost importance. During the adolescent years there are so many factors of change. A teen's life is in constant turmoil and they experience roller coaster emotions.

We, as parents can build our teen's self confidence by complimenting him daily to let him know we are in "his corner". Be careful! Offering a compliment often is confused with flattery. A compliment deals with a person's character. Flattery deals with something that they can not control.

Flattery would be telling your daughter she has beautiful eyes and a gorgeous body. She has no control over those attributes. She was made that way. How much better to point out traits she, herself has developed.

True compliments of character will tell your child you believe in the person she is becoming. You will encourage her in more positive character development.

Back to Basics

Home used to be a place where teens could relax and be themselves. It is not that way today. Activities at school are now the center stage in a teen's life. Children are rushed into school at younger ages; they are pushed to socialize at earlier ages, many times before they are ready.

A peer-oriented generation of teens has developed. We no longer have a family orientation. I suggest you develop more family time. Schedule family picnics, family days, vacations, and attend family reunions. Invite friends of your children into your home. Make your home a place where your children want to be.

Coping with a Self-Centered Teen

Teens are naturally self-centered. They are experiencing changes in their bodies and emotions. They become pre-occupied with themselves.

Take heart. Realize that this is very temporary. As your teen goes through these changes you have the responsibility to teach him compassion for others.

You need to convey to your teen that God loves him and you love him just the way he is. Remind him often that there are physical and emotional changes taking place in his life and they will one day dwindle away. This is just a passing time of change on his way to adulthood.

Your teen especially needs to know you love him. He needs to know you support him. And most importantly he

Success or Failure

Parents have a choice to destroy their teen or build her up. I believe teens will become what you expect them to be. They will fail if that is what you expect; Encourage them and they will succeed in accomplishing a task.

Parents often fail to check up on chores and projects assigned to their teen. When you don't check up they lose interest and won't complete the task. When checking up, praise them, and if needed, correct them in a positive way.

I remember our son washed windows for me; he left them streaked. I didn't send him to do something else, but I showed him how to successfully wash windows.

Let's use a check up system to help teach our kids. Let's expect them to succeed and show them we believe they can do it!