

GOING FURTHER – Resources

and trying to understand increase your ability to have influence. Dr. James Dobson stresses the value of routine family connections as a way to cultivate relationship. He cites research showing the positive difference parents make when they are available for their teens in the morning, after school, at dinnertime, and at bedtime. If your current routine is making these connections difficult, it may be time for a change.

STEP TWO: Be the parent

Some parents interpret the need for relationship as a call to be good friends to their teens, but you need to be the parent—the one who brings stability and structure to the child’s life by setting boundaries and expectations. Showing that kind of authority can be difficult for some, but it is an essential role of parenting. It can also be challenging to direct your teen in a way that doesn’t exasperate him or her (Ephesians 6:4) when you feel disrespected. As the adult, you need to sacrifice your hurt feelings and anger to do what’s best for your teen. You are called as the parent to lovingly direct your teen through the challenges leading to adulthood. Ephesians 4:15 directs us to “speak the truth in love.” Ask God to show you when it’s important to be tough and when you need to lead with gentleness and compassionate love.

STEP THREE: If serious - seek professional help

In this church body, you are surrounded by parents who have raised teenagers; many of whom faced challenges similar to yours. There’s no reason to be embarrassed by the challenges you have or to strive to keep the veneer of a perfect family. You need the support and wisdom of those who have been where you are. Do you find yourself asking any of these questions?

- How can I find out if my child is using drugs or alcohol?
- Is my daughter having sex, and if so, what should I do?
- Why does my child seem so depressed?
- I think my son is looking at on-line pornography. What do I do?

Problems such as alcohol or drug use, pornography addiction, sexual experimentation, severe depression and other challenges may fall beyond your understanding and require the help of counselors and experts who can bring Biblical wisdom along with professional understanding of teens and risky behavior.

Recommended Books:

[Boundaries with Teens: When to say yes, How to say No:](#) (by Dr. John Townsend) offers advice on how to deal with disrespectful attitudes and irresponsible behaviors in your teen, how to set healthy limits and realistic consequences, how to be loving and caring while establishing rules, and how to determine specific strategies to deal with problems, both big and small.

[Yes, Your Teen Is Crazy:](#) (by Michael Bradley) explains that the most advanced parts of brain development aren’t completed until adolescence is nearly over. As a result, teens can appear unstable, dysfunctional and unpredictable, with temporarily impaired judgment and decision-making processes. The good news is that parents do make a difference, and Bradley clearly explains how parents can encourage and guide their kids through these tumultuous years. (Disclaimer: This book contains some strong language describing difficult situations.)

[Have a New Teenager by Friday:](#) From Mouthy and Moody to Respectful and Responsible in 5 Days & **[Have a New Kid by Friday:](#)** How to Change Your Child’s Attitude, Behavior & Character in 5 Days (by Kevin Leman): Parents may survive the terrible twos and the first years of school all right, but the teenage years bring entirely new game!

Recommended Website:

Focusonthefamily.com: Select the Parenting or Life Challenges tab, then select from the numerous options on the left. Or enter teen in the search box. For answers to specific question also try **<http://family.custhelp.com>**

Familylife.com: Select the Parenting tab and then choose from the numerous options or enter teen in the search box.

Crosswalk.com: Offers excellent information under their family tab, or enter - teen or trouble with teen in the Crosswalk search bar.

