



Parenting Teens



“Teen parenting is not about coercion or control—it's about giving your child the space and guidance to grow into a mature adult.

~Laura Ramirez

Many parents don't realise that they need to change their parenting styles when children move from their childhood years to the adolescent years.

To simply continue try to control everything a teen does is a recipe for disaster. Parents will feel frustrated and teenagers feel resentful.

As our children grow, whether we like it or not, the relationship changes – and we must change to meet its new joys and challenges. Parents are wise to gradually transfer control and responsibility for choices and actions to their teens.

As your child matures, he needs you less as a governor and more as a mentor, someone who leads by walking alongside. Mentors major in guiding, encouraging, and teaching not in controlling. The transition from governor to mentor is made by slowly letting go during the teen years giving more and more responsibility and trust as the child proves himself trustworthy.

To help you get the most out of mentoring relationship with your teens, remember the word **CONNECT**. The seven qualities of effective mentoring are as follow:

- ✓ **Consistent:** As a mentor you will need to make the time to be committed and dependable in being available to your teen. This may mean making yourself available to drive them places.
- ✓ **Open:** Be genuine and honest about yourself... Be willing to listen and be open to some risks as you both embark on this new relationship.

- ✓ **Nurture:** Be willing to provide and atmosphere of acceptance and willingness to grow. Allow the teen to develop at his or her own pace without pressure to perform. Be gentle with mistakes.
- ✓ **Notice:** Tune in to each other. Listen and observe cues. Spend more time listening than talking if you have a tendency to talk too much. Notice how your teen feels and display emotions.
- ✓ **Encourage:** Pour courage into your teen by affirming, believing in, and supporting him/her. Create intimacy by keeping certain discussions personal and confidential instead of sharing it with friends or other family members.
- ✓ **Care:** Demonstrate love by being patient, forgiving, understanding, and non-judgmental. Mentoring is more about care than it is about imparting information
- ✓ **Talk:** Speak life, not death. How important it is to guard our tongues when talking with our children. Once released a word has a life of its own. It's very difficult to undo the damage of negative, disparaging, discouraging words once they are spoken. Avoid name calling or criticizing your teen when something goes wrong.

Excerpt from “Spiritual Mentoring of Teens” by Joe White & Jim Weidmann

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CONTACT US

Calvary Life Ministries
Tel: 03-77103360
Email: clm@clm.org.my
Web: www.clm.org.my

Director:
Pam Guneratnam (MSc)