

FOR PARENTS  
WITH

# TEENS

By Rebecca Simon

Does it sometimes seem like your cheerful, talkative child evolved into an aloof teen almost overnight? Are grunts and shrugs part of many conversations? If so, you're not alone! For many teens, these quiet and introspective periods are actually a normal part of development. Instead of feeling disrespected, use this time to build stronger relationships with your teen.

## 7 TIPS

FOR KEEPING THE  
CONVERSATION GOING

### DON'T TAKE IT PERSONAL.

As bodies and brains prepare for adulthood, it's normal for teens to feel they need a little distance from parents. They still need you and want to talk—just not 24/7.

### UNDERSTAND.

Be patient and allow a little space now, your teen will probably be more receptive to talking later.

### BE AVAILABLE.

Pay attention and notice when your child seems ready to talk. Is he/she hovering in the kitchen as you make dinner? Seize the moment.

### RESIST ADVICE.

If your teen shares something negative about his/her day, they probably want empathy—not advice. Instead of offering tips, try something like: “You sound disappointed; tell me about it...”

### LIMIT QUESTIONS.

Too many questions can be conversation stoppers. Instead, try sharing something briefly about your own day—something that made you laugh, inspired you or was an embarrassing moment.

### NOTICE IF THINGS GET TOO QUIET..

If your teen seems extremely withdrawn or if moods are impacting school or other activities, consult a doctor or mental health professional. Many young people can use extra support during those vulnerable years.

### LIGHTEN UP

The teen years can be intense for parents and kids. Find something you both enjoy laughing about and build it into your daily routine. It could be a funny TV show, book, or simply finding humor in everyday life.

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Reference:

<https://parentethical.wisc.edu/9-tips-to-keep-the-conversation-flowing-with-your-teen/>