

Establishing and Maintaining a Relationship with Your Youth

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Your Youth

The preteen years are truly tricky for establishing connections with your youth! Not only is your child going through lots of physical growth, they are also starting to experience the emotional fluctuations associated with puberty. However, if you invest some time and have patience, you can continue to build a meaningful relationship with your child.

Make Time for Talking

First, you must devote some 1-on-1 time with your child. It could be as simple as taking that one child with you to run a quick errand, or even using a car ride to make a connection. Some bond over baking goodies, working on small home projects, or gardening in the backyard. Still, others families opt to do parent-child “mini-dates.” Pack a picnic lunch and head out for a hike, or have your child pick their favorite dessert hang-out or sushi place! The environment should be relaxed and chill so that you can carry a good conversation. The most important thing is that your child feels you value them and you love them.

Ask Open-Ended Questions

Sometimes, an honest conversation starts up naturally and you can just go with the flow. But if you are stuck with nothing to say, here are some good open-ended questions that can help guide your conversation:

What’s going on with you these days?

What’s your favorite song? What do you like about it?

What are you looking forward to this week, month or year?

Who are your best friends? What do you like about them?

What seems to be bothering you? Is something on your mind?

What goals do you have for your future? What can I do to support you?

How do you feel about _____?

Need Feedback From Parents

What other suggestions or conversation starters do you have for connecting with your youth? We'd love to hear them!

Jaime

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