

HINTS FOR PARENTS ON HOW TO RAISE SELF-ESTEEM IN ADOLESCENTS

Give personal attention to a teen when he/she needs it. If your teen is moody, hanging around and/or asking general questions about things, listen non-judgmentally and let him/her know you understand. Stop what you are doing and really listen to what is being said (undistracted attention is quality attention). A comment or offering of advice is not often necessary.

Show affection in what you say and do. Keep it simple. "I love you.... I like you a lot..... You're okay" is enough. Your teen may seem outwardly embarrassed but will be inwardly pleased.

Be specific with praise. Make sure your teen sees, hears and feels your approval not just your criticisms. Your room looks great. You really have a knack for organizing things. Omit comments like "when you want to or why didn't you do that before".

Praise considerate behavior. Let him/her know when he/she is helpful or cooperative with you or others. Encourage him/her to take credit and praise.

Respect your own feelings with teen's relationships with friends by providing opportunities for them to visit your home and by showing your acceptance. A welcoming and comfortable atmosphere will allow your teen to socialize at home.

Share your own feelings with your teen. Admitting your feelings isn't a sign of weakness nor does it jeopardize your role as a parent. It helps you move toward the adult-to-adult relationship that you need to establish.

Share your interests, hobbies and some of your life concerns. Don't burden him/her with serious adult problems but now is the time to share more complicated interests and activities that you couldn't during his/her childhood.

Occasionally do something special with your teen that satisfies a particular need or interest. Attend school concerts and sporting events in which he/she is involved. If music or a particular sport is of great interest, take him/her to a concert or athletic event of a more professional nature.

Spend time alone with your teen when needs of other family members are not a distraction. Plan a camping trip, a lunch and shopping date, etc. Your teen may begin to talk more when other family members are not around and if you are listening. Try not to react or even to overreact to the things he/she is saying. Real listening will lessen his/her fear of approaching you.

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Employee Assistance Program

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