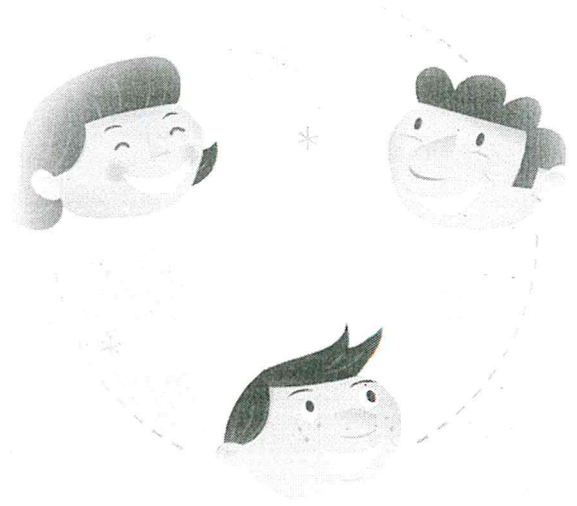


How Can Parents Talk to their Teens?



Be Open

Teens appreciate parental honesty and want to hear about your own experiences with dating and relationships.

Be the Expert

Teens who believe that their parents know a lot are more likely to listen to them. Even if you feel like you don't have all the answers, take the time to listen and to respond.

Be Accessible

Parents have busy schedules, but it's important to be available to your teen when they need to speak with you. If you can't talk, schedule a time to talk as soon as possible.

Be Trusting

Teens want their parents to trust them and to show that they love them no matter what. You can tell your teen that you trust that they will share their thoughts about the big issues in their life, including the decision to have sex.

Stay Calm

Some teens worry that their parents may react badly if they learn that they are having sex or are thinking about having sex. Teens say that staying calm is one thing that parents can do to really improve conversations about sensitive topics like sex.

Ask Open-Ended Questions

People like to talk about themselves and their ideas. Ask your teen what he or she thinks, using open-ended questions (ones that can't be answered with a simple "yes" or "no").

Listen To Your Teen

Let your teen speak without interruption. Let your teen finish his or her thoughts. Sometimes it helps to repeat what you think you have heard.

Put Yourself in Your Teen's Shoes

Teens like it if you try to see things from their point of view. Make an effort to put yourself in the place of your teen and think about things from his or her point of view.

Appeal to Common Goals

Your teen needs to be reminded that you are on his or her side. Whenever possible, emphasize common goals and tell your teen you want what is best for him or her.

Show Your Interest

Make sure your teen feels you're giving them your full attention. Make eye contact with your teen and nod your head to indicate you understand what your teen is saying.

76%

of 8th, 10th & 12th grade students felt that if they had a personal problem, they could ask their parents for help.

According to the 2013 Ottawa County Youth Assessment Survey,
www.miOttawa.org/2013YAS