6 Signs Your Teen May Be in a Toxic Relationship

Moving into the phase where children become aware of their sexual feelings is difficult enough. After they actually start dating, parenting reaches a whole new level of complicated.

This was particularly the case for a friend of mine whose son became involved in a toxic relationship while in high school. On the surface, the relationship seemed fine, but deep down he felt like something was off. At first, he attributed it to his own discomfort to this new phase of life. Eventually, he realized that wasn't the case. The relationship was unhealthy and he wasn't the only one who was seeing it.

By the time he and the rest of his family started to talk to his son about the relationship, it was like he was caught in a deep pit. Nothing they said could break him out of it, not even when his friends began voicing the same concerns. Finally, his girlfriend broke up with him and after time apart, his son was able to see the truth, but not before a lot of damage had been done.

Although the signs were there it took a long time for them to act. By the time they did their son was so ingrained in the relationship he could no longer hear their concerns. Fortunately, it eventually ended. If your teen is in a relationship make sure it doesn't become toxic.

If you see any of the following six signs, intervene immediately:

1. They separate themselves from friends and family. It's common for teens to separate from their families, particularly parents, during adolescence. However, doing so after entering a relationship is a red flag. When they spend considerably less time with their friends, especially if they lose them

altogether, the alarm bells should go off. There could be a number of reasons involved in their isolation. They have become obsessed with the person they are dating or the other person is controlling and possessive.

If you see a sudden change in their friendships or family relationships, sit down and talk to them about your concerns. This would be a good time to set boundaries or schedule consistent family time.

2. Their physical appearance changes. If there are sudden changes in the clothes they wear or hairstyle, it could mean they are changing themselves to appeal to the other person. Relationships should bring personal growth and sometimes that means learning to look more presentable. There's also nothing wrong with trying new looks, but when teens feel pressure to look or dress a certain way to earn affection, it has turned toxic. It's a signal that your teen has low self-esteem or has become dependent on the sense of belonging the other person's approval gives them. Ask them questions about how they feel about themselves. Get a discussion going. One revealing question could be, "What is one thing you would change about yourself?" You'll probably be surprised by the answer.

3. Their personality changes. A relationship with a toxic person, no matter what type, is not a safe place. It usually has an effect on the victim's emotional state of being. If you see them go from being a lively, upbeat person to more quiet, depressed, withdrawn, suspicious or melancholy, talk to them about it as soon as possible. Any personality change is a sign they are being belittled, controlled or are so tangled they are following the emotional roller coaster of their boyfriend or girlfriend. They are carrying a heaviness that comes from the instability, and possibly the abuse, of the relationship.

4. They repeatedly make excuses for the other person's bad behavior. When you hear them apologize on behalf of the person they are dating, it's a signal their sense of self may be

wrapped up in that person. They actually start taking partial or full responsibility for the other's wrongdoing.

5. They minimize violations. Many times, a toxic relationship is like being in prison with a fear of parole. They recognize the dysfunction but minimize the severity of it for fear of life without that person. They end up afraid to confront things that are wrong because it could lead to the end of the relationship. As a result, they attempt to convince others and themselves that things aren't that bad. Another situation is they become so enamored with the person they actually can't see the wrongdoing. In their mind the person is perfect.

They almost begin to worship that person. This opens the door for a lot of power and manipulation.

6. There always seems to be drama. Someone's feelings are always hurt or there's constant fighting. The worst combination of this is combining someone who is deeply insecure and someone who is attracted to drama. If your teen has what even hints of a volatile relationship, you need to intervene. Teenagers, whether they admit it or not, need their parents help in learning how to have healthy relationships. {eoa}

BJ Foster *is the director of content creation for All Pro Dad and a married father of two. For the original article, visit* allprodad.com*.*

Communicating With Your Kids

on a Deeper Level

Recently, I had some downtime in my workday and I walked by my son's room to find him leaning on the steps of his bunk bed, staring and doing nothing. I work from home and he is homeschooled.

So, I walked into his room and rested next to his beanbag chair. He immediately came off the steps and sat next to me. I asked him, "What's on your mind?" What followed was a deeper conversation than I anticipated. It started light with basic topics covered—his sister's 16th birthday party, my brother and his family who had recently visited from out of state, and some of the superhero movies we had recently watched.

Then we found ourselves talking about school concerns, problems he and his siblings had been having, and more. As we talked I realized how important these one-on-one talks are. I need to be intentional in fostering these types of conversations regularly. Now I have scheduled times for each child to have alone time with me. It's my way of making these types of conversations happen.

Here are four ways to have deeper conversations with kids.

Get on Their Level

Our 6-year-old is the youngest and shortest in the house. One time I got on my knees and walked around a little bit. It was a completely different perspective, and that is his view all the time. He looks up to everything, making it seem like everybody is looking down on him. So, I often squat or sit down when I speak to him. It enables me to get face-to-face, to look him eye-to-eye and gets me on his level. When I do, he knows he has my attention and the conversations flow. Try getting on your kids' level, physically, when talking to them.

Get Comfortable in Their Space

As I reflect on the conversation I mentioned in our son's bedroom I'm realizing some of our best and deepest conversations happen there. When I sit or lay down in his room, I'm in his area where he's most comfortable, and he opens up. The same happens with our other two kids as well. They sleep, hang out and just spend time in their rooms. They are very comfortable there and it's private. They can just relax, open up and be themselves.

We have talks at the kitchen table, but that's not just their space. Deep conversations have happened there, but I think the deepest conversations we've had happened when I got comfortable in their own space. I believe the same will happen with you.

Never Stop Talking

Small talk, deep conversations, talks about goals, about school, sports—whatever, never stop talking to them, even when they aren't as talkative. Keep the lines of communication open, and have as much conversation with your kids as you possibly can. The more quantity conversation you have will open the door for more quality conversations. When the communication dies in any relationship, the relationship will soon follow. Never stop talking to your kids.

Never Stop Listening

Make sure you are listening, intently. I'm guilty of forming an opinion before they are done speaking. Or going into problem-solving mode when they just want to express themselves to me. Your kids aren't always looking for an answer, sometimes just an ear. Listening to your kids will keep open the door to deeper conversations.

As dads, we want to have meaningful influence with our kids. If we have a surface-level relationship built on surface-level conversations, then our influence will be limited. Practice what I've mentioned above and you'll be able to go deep with

your kids. {eoa}

Jackie Bledsoe *is an author, blogger, and speaker, but first and foremost a husband and father of three, who helps men better lead and love the ones who matter most.*

For the original article, visit allprodad.com.

Where Real Emotional Healing Occurs

Last year, Jeff Bethke shared a message at our church. The focus of his message was **healing**.

One of his underlying themes was …

"Healing comes from knowing God, not knowing more about God."

I thought that I'd share a few of the notes I jotted down in my notebook—along with some that came from the Sermon's Study Guide—in an effort to share some relevant points that Bethke made regarding **healing**, and that are principles we find in the Bible.

God gave the first man a mission—to care for the Earth and to be an image bearer of God. He instructed man not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God wanted man to be dependent on Him for wisdom, not on man and on books (Prov. 3:5-6).

Man disobeyed God. This sin was a type of fracture or infection. It has infected every person since with a sin nature.

After this first sin, Adam and Eve covered themselves and hid. Our nature is to hide from our sin. Evil sends us into covering and hiding. When we are in hiding, we can't be on mission for God.

God's response was to ask them a question: "Where are you?" His question to them was a call to come out of hiding. He calls us each to come out of hiding from our sin. He knows that if we keep our sins to ourselves, this gives sin power over us.

God put on human flesh—Jesus—so that He could walk among men (John 1:1).

Jesus cleanses us and makes us clean. Touching and being touched by Jesus makes us righteous, gives us hope.

Knowing more about God is different than being in His presence. More than having information about Jesus in our mind, He desires that we sit quietly with Him in His presence. (Read the story about the walk to Emmaus in Luke 24:13-34).

It's in being quiet with God—in His presence—that we really get to know and experience Him and that an environment is created for **healing**.

God wants to heal our emotional and spiritual scars because we can then share about God's nature and goodness with others.

And then He gets more glory!

It can be easy for us to seek more and more knowledge about God and His principles. And, though this is important, I believe that more than this, God wants us to just sit with Him and appreciate and worship Him.

My encouragement to you is this: Make it a habit to just sit quietly with God. Psalm 46:10 says, "Be still and know that I am God." Open your heart to him. Invite Him to reveal Himself to you. Connect with Him—your heart to His. Make it about

connecting your heart to His heart, not about getting more knowledge about Him into your head. Then, simply enjoy His presence.

This is where real **healing** occurs.

Related Questions

- What deep wounds or scars are you covering up or hiding from?
- What do you do, or turn to, to hide from your deepest scars or to numb the pain associated with your wounds?
- How frequently do you sit quietly with Jesus, without reading the Bible for more information?

Dale Fletcher, *executive director of Faith and Health Connection Ministry, is a speaker and wellness coach who lives in Fort Mill, South Carolina. He conducts workshops and retreats on the link between the Christian faith and health. Connect with Dale at* faithandhealthconnection.org *and on Facebook.*

For the original article, visit faithandhealthconnection.org.

---

3 Hidden Reasons You Gain Weight

Are you having problems releasing weight? One important principle I encourage in the **Take Back Your Temple program** is to pay attention to how certain foods make you feel. This gives you valuable feedback into how your body is responding to the foods you eat.

We are all different in that we each tolerate certain foods

better than others.

A food journal empowers you to become a detective, discovering which foods make you feel and function best—and which don't.

This can make all the difference in whether you will have the energy and focus needed to fulfill your God-given purpose and live an abundant life.

It puts the power of choice in your hands because it gives you answers to these questions:

- Do certain foods make you bloat, clog up your sinuses and drain your energy? Make a note of them and replace them with a better alternative that doesn't cause problems.
- Do certain foods make you feel energetic and strong? Pay attention! You want to emphasize those. Including those in your regular diet has a direct impact on the quality of your life because you'll feel healthier and stronger more often.

In keeping a food journal, I have discovered 3 food types that make me bloat, drain my energy and cause me to gain weight.

My body is very sensitive; it has a hair-trigger alert system so when I eat the wrong types of foods, it is quick to respond negatively.

My sinuses are like the "canary in the coal mine" for me. It is my first alert that something has triggered my body's warning system via a food sensitivity or allergy.

When my sinuses clog up, that means my body is retaining water to protect itself from an irritant:

- Retaining water means gaining weight
- Gaining weight means an increase in blood volume
- Increased blood volume means an increase in my blood pressure

Not only that, but eating these foods cause me to have food cravings. Not good!

Here are my 3 trouble foods:

- Sugar
- Salt
- Wheat-based products

1. Sugar. Most processed foods are loaded with sugar and salt for flavoring and to keep them on the shelves longer. Great for the manufacturer's profits; bad for your health!

If you are having difficulty releasing weight, you may want to check your refrigerator, cabinets, and freezer for processed foods. You probably are eating more than your body can handle.

If you are saying, "I'm eating healthy but I'm not losing weight," then I recommend you start with a sugar audit to get more insight. Some foods you are eating may not be as "healthy" as you think!

Sugar Audit

Get a pen and paper. Read the labels on the foods in your refrigerator, freezer, cabinets, and pantry. Write down any food that has more than **10 grams of sugar per serving**. Your goal is to make the majority of your food intake less than 10 grams per serving.

I've discovered I have a very small sugar tank. I can't eat much at all before my body's alarm system goes off in the form of sinus problems and weight gain. So I rarely mess with sugar.

2. Salt. A mistake I made in the last few months is allowing salt back into my diet. This happened in small, subtle increments—so small that I didn't even notice. Unfortunately, this was a serious mistake because it also causes water retention, weight gain, and high blood pressure in me.

So this week, I did a “salt audit” to catch any salt thieves that sneaked into my life unawares. Here are the thieves I found:

- Salad dressings (yes, they were healthy in other ways, but loaded with sodium)
- Barbecue sauce
- Chicken bouillon
- Onion soup mix
- Corn meal mix
- Chili seasoning mix

I threw these out and will need to find lower sodium alternatives when I go to the grocery store next time. I must start paying better attention to this category.

If you are having difficulty losing weight, then I recommend you also do a salt audit of the foods you are eating.

Salt Audit

Check all food labels in your home. Write down any food that you find in the High sodium category.

- Low-sodium food: less than 140 milligrams per serving
- Moderate-sodium food: less than 400 milligrams per serving
- High-sodium food: more than 400 milligrams per serving

Your goal is to only have low to medium sodium foods in your home, preferably low sodium. Have fun experimenting with spice combinations in your cooking to add flavor to your meals.

3. Wheat-based products

You may not have issues with wheat-based products, but I have a sensitivity to foods made with flour—whether wheat or white flour.

My body views them as an irritant and reacts with the same

“sinus-clogging – > water retention – > weight gain – > high blood pressure” alarm system as it does with too much sugar and salt in my diet.

So I focus on brown rice, corn, potatoes, sweet potatoes, and non-gluten grains for carbohydrates rather than flour-based products, like breads and pastas.

Once again, pay attention to how food makes you feel. If a certain food makes you bloat, feel sleepy, or makes your skin itch or break out, then you likely have a sensitivity or allergy to it.

Try eliminating it from your diet for 21 days and see if your symptoms improve. If they do, then you can make an informed choice about replacing it with a better alternative that “plays well” with your unique body chemistry.

I hope these tips have given you new insight into what may be causing your body to hold on to weight. The smartest thing you can do is to make the majority of your diet foods that God made versus foods that man has processed.

After all, who knows better what works for your body than the Creator?

If you do the salt or sugar audit I recommend, I would love to hear what you discovered! Please note your findings in the comments section. {eoa}

Once 240 pounds and a size 22, **Kimberly Taylor** *can testify of God’s healing power to end binge eating. She is an author and the creator of the Christian weight loss website takebackyourtemple.com. Visit today for inspirational health and weight-loss tips.*

For the original article, visit takebackyourtemple.com.

You Can Have Incredible Kingdom Power If You Will Only Do This

Have America and the world forgotten the Azusa Street Revival? Evangelist Billye Brim says if you only knew how much power you have in the blood of Jesus.

Brim, who studied under Kenneth Hagin Sr., tells Sid Roth on a recent episode of *It's Supernatural* that Satan knows his time on this Earth is short. But, believers need only to look at Revelation 12:11 to realize the power they have over the enemy.

"Everything we have is based on the shed blood of Jesus," Brim says.

Watch the video and plead the blood of Jesus! {eoa}

---

5 Ways to Show True Humility Before the Lord

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up" (James 4:10).

Here is the main point of this section in James 4. This is not a suggestion. This is not just good advice. This is not just

the opinion of a follower of Christ. This is straight from the mouth of the one who humbled Himself before all mankind and God the Father.

In Matthew 23:12 Jesus states, *"Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."* Truer words have never been spoken. Jesus is speaking these words because arrogance and pride have been man's downfall from the beginning.

Eve ate of the fruit because she knew that it would make her wise and she was tempted into thinking that God would not keep His word. That is no different than us. We think we can do whatever we like and there will be no punishment for our disobedience. We think we can act however we feel and there will be no consequences to those actions.

That is pride. That is arrogance to think that we know best. It is putting ourselves above where we should be. It is exalting ourselves when we think we know what is best. When we take God out of the picture and do what our flesh desires, there is no humility in that.

There is no humility when we go after the things of this world. It is not reliance on our Lord and Savior when we make decisions based upon our flesh instead of on what God commands. When all is said and done and Jesus comes back for His sheep, those that have humbled themselves before Christ will be exalted with Christ. But those that exalt themselves now will be humiliated in hell for eternity.

David says in Psalm 51:17, *"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart."* All God wants from us is humility, not arrogance and pride. Jesus displayed His humility when He left heaven to come to Earth and take our punishment and die in our place. That, my friend, is humility.

Jesus said in John 15:13, *"Greater love has no man than this:*

that a man lay down his life for his friends." Jesus laid down His life for you and for me. That is humility.

How do we humble ourselves before a holy and righteous God who knows our heart? Here are five ways:

1. Confess your arrogance and ask for true humility.

2. Confess your secret sins and ask for forgiveness.

3. Confess that all of this is too big for you and that you need help.

4. Confess your need for mercy and grace.

5. Confess your desperateness for help right now.

Go to the One who is able to give you what you so desperately need. {eoa}

Jody Burkeen *is the founder and president of MAN UP! Gods Way Ministries. This ministry was birthed out of a desire to change the way Christian men "do" Christianity. Jody's self-described "Damascus Road Transformation" led him on a journey to search the Scriptures to find what he had been missing his whole life, which was Jesus Christ. In this journey, the Word of God took over in a way he never expected. Searching for men in the church to help him in his walk, he found very little help. What he did find was men who needed the same kind of help he did.*

For the original article, visit manupgodsway.org.

What You as a Believer Can Do to Show God’s Infinite Love

My heart has been broken over the past few weeks of racial unrest in America. The truth is this: My heart actually stays in a continual state of brokenness over the world we live in, over the choices that humanity makes, and over the angry hearts that seem to be leading the way.

My heart has been broken over the racial divide that is bitterly alienating people in this great nation that I love. My heart grieves when bullets fly … when fathers are killed … when police are vilified … and when white vs. black or Hispanic vs. white becomes the source of bitter and enraged discourse.

I know that there are many reasons why this outbreak of racial tension has occurred. The answers can be found in philosophical reasoning, in socioeconomic inequities or in a history of unfair treatment that can explode in a moment’s time.

But what can I do about it? What can I, as an ordinary white, middle-class Christian woman do to alleviate the pain that my brothers and sisters are enduring?

I will probably never speak before congress or be interviewed on an evening news show. I will probably never have the opportunity to obtain an audience with the power brokers of this generation or to write a flaming and righteous editorial that will be published in newspapers across the country.

I will never be asked to pose a question at a presidential debate.

As a follower of Jesus Christ, I remind myself daily that I am not powerless—I am powerful! Jesus has made me to be the

carrier of His DNA to a world in pain. I am here at this very moment in history to right wrongs, to pray for peace and to show human kindness in the face of division and cruelty.

Like Esther, I am here for such a time as this!

I happen to believe that the power of kindness is more dynamic than the power of Congress. I know that I know that I know that kindness holds more intrinsic value than does a popular TV host or a blistering editorial that millions might read.

I can be kind. I can be intentionally kind. I can be proactively kind. I can be enthusiastically kind. I can be perpetually kind.

I can be kind to those who look different than me. I can be kind to those who believe differently than I do. I can be kind to those who choose differently than I do.

I can be kind to policeman and to people of different races. I can be kind to a young man whose body is covered with tattoos and piercings. I can be kind to people who are voting for a different candidate than I am. I can be kind to people who choose to be unkind to people like me.

I fervently believe that it is better to be kind than to be right. Perhaps the most powerful choice each one of us can make, rather than merely spouting opinions on social media, is to make a choice of kindness this week.

Pay for the dinner of a person whose skin color is different than yours.

Make eye contact with a young person whose skin is tattooed and smile at them. Ask them a question with joy and with meaning. “How are you doing today? You know, call me crazy, but I love encouraging people and I just want to tell you that your life matters to God!”

Make friends with someone whose heritage is different than

yours. Peace starts with one relationship, one friendship, one loving word.

Take pizza or apple cider to the local police station or fire station.

Have a Republican—or a Democrat—over for dinner and refuse to talk about politics! Talk about music, travel, a good book, your children and your childhoods. You may discover that you have much more in common than what divides you.

Invite a conservative—or a liberal—out for a cup of coffee and refuse to talk about divisive issues. Talk about your favorite sports team, your holiday traditions, what you are thankful for, or plans for a future vacation. You may discover that this person is quite likable after all!

God never makes unity out of similarity but He always makes unity out of diversity. We are not cookie-cutter human beings, but everyone—black and white and Hispanic, Republican and Democrat, liberal and conservative, Harvard-educated and high school drop-outs—has a heart that loves deeply.

We all possess a vicious hope that peace really will win in the end, and we each embrace a quest for justice that is buried beneath our political leanings and our individual belief system.

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." – Edmund Burke {eoa}

Game Changer: When You Win

Every Time With Your Prayers

Are your prayers getting past the ceiling? Evangelist Robert Henderson received a revelation from God that the devil is a legalist—but there's a game changer where you win every time.

"We are the officer of the court, anointed, authorized, deputized by the Holy Spirit to take what Jesus did on the cross and put it into action until there is a practical function connected to what He did," Henderson told Sid Roth on a recent episode of *It's Supernatural.*

Watch the video for the rest of Roth's interview and great insight into this powerful teaching. {eoa}

No Matter Your Sin, God Wants to Do This for You

God will give you a new heart (Ezek. 36:26). It doesn't matter what was in your heart before you came to Christ. God will give you a new heart. If you've been struggling in any area, know that God wants to give you a new heart that is free from bondage.

The Bible says, "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things have passed away. Look, all things have become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). God will give you a heart transplant. He will do a miracle in your heart. This is God's promise through the new covenant.

It started with the people of Israel. God told them, "I'm going to do something inside of you." Even though it is being

taught that once you are a homosexual, you will always be a homosexual, God can still completely transform you. The same is taught about alcoholism: If you were once an alcoholic you will always be an alcoholic. **The devil is a liar.** I don't care how much of an alcoholic you were; you can be delivered. And when you are delivered you are no longer an alcoholic. **You are a new creature in Christ**. When God delivers you from alcoholism, you can't even stand the taste of it anymore.

When God delivers you from smoking, you don't even like the way cigarettes smell anymore. You wondered how you ever smoked.

When God changes your heart, you are no longer the same person you were before. There may be temptations that try to pull you back into your previous lifestyle, but you can shut those down.

You don't have to be a homosexual or a lesbian anymore; you don't have to be a fornicator or an adulterer. God is saying, "When I do this work in your heart, there is going to be such a miracle that people are going to say they can't believe it. They will wonder how you left that lifestyle." The kind of change I am speaking of has to be an inside job.

We have testimonies of transgender people who have gotten saved. Some even had sex changes. We tend to think that if someone goes that far they are reprobate. But *nothing* is too far for God's reach. God can do a miracle in the person's life and change his or her heart.

I want to remind you that there is nothing too hard for God, but pride blocks prayer, worship and the moving of the Holy Spirit. Proud people can hinder the flow of the Holy Spirit; humility is a key to operating in the power of the Holy Spirit.

When we pray, we should always approach God with a spirit of humility. The concept of supplication in Bible verses such as

Philippians 4:6 is about submitting a request to one who is in authority over us. God is our creator, our ruler. He is sovereign. He is to be reverenced and feared. He is our ultimate help. But those who operate with a spirit of pride will have the attitude that they don't even need God, that they don't need His covering and protection. Pride will cause us to strive and work things out on our own. Pride causes us to lean to our own understanding, which is, at the very least, limited. We cut God's infinite wisdom and unlimited strength and provision out of the picture, and we set ourselves up for failure and burnout, among other things.

Pride is a mean spirit. People who are prideful disregard the feelings and needs of others. There is no consideration in the way they interact with other people. They speak to them however they want. But this is not how we as believers are to carry on in our day-to-day conversation with others. We should always be walking in love, grace, humility and kindness.

Pride makes you think you don't need anyone, that you can do everything on your own. It leads you to see people as resources to leverage and use to achieve your own ends. Pride keeps you from experiencing the intimacy of relationship, collaboration and exchanging thought and ideas. It keeps you from seeing the value in others. Pride will lead us to compete rather than collaborate.

Humility is a great weapon against pride, and it invites the grace of God (James 4:6) into the battle. The spirit of pride produces a hardness of heart in people (Job 41:24), making it even more difficult to bring those being used by this spirit to the repentance they need.

The battle with pride is the toughest of all because it's at the root of our fallen nature. We will *not* win against this in our own strength. We *can* win, though not without humbling ourselves before God and seeking Him for deliverance. His Word says that we are new creatures in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17) and He

has promised to give us a new heart (Ezek. 36:26). There is *nothing* impossible with God, and all things are possible to him who believes. Do you believe that? {eoa}

Adapted from Destroying the Spirit of Rejection by John Eckhardt*, copyright 2016, published by Charisma House. If you have ever felt rejected or know people who have, this book is a valuable tool to help you and use you to help others break free from its effects, embrace God's love, restoration, healing and empowerment to walk in His blessing and abundance. To order your copy, click here.*

Prayer Power for the Week of October 2, 2016

This week thank the Lord that nothing is impossible with Him. Ask Him to dispel any doubts you may have concerning what seems impossible in the eyes of man and trust that He is sovereign over all. Pray His will in all things and rejoice that He will accomplish what you ask. Continue to pray for wisdom and safety regarding the upcoming elections. Stand in faith for God's promises concerning Israel, worldwide revival and the pouring out of His Spirit on all flesh. Pray that believers will unite together in prayer and purpose for God's will to be done in our nation and around the world (2 Cor. 5:17; Ezek. 36:26).

---

15 Conversation Starters for You and Your Teen

One of the most exciting parts of my job is being able to meet fathers all over the country. Yet time and time again, they often say to me, "Do you have any tips that will help me to better communicate with my teen? When I ask them questions,

all I get is a grunt, a ‘nothing,’ or an ‘I don’t know.'”

When it comes to building conversation with teenagers, many guys don’t know where to start. Nurturing teen talk consists of asking good questions. This will help get you started. I’ve created this list of conversation starters for you:

1. If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you travel to?

2. Who is your best friend?

3. What would your perfect day consist of?

4. What is your favorite memory of us?

5. What qualities are you looking for in a spouse?

6. If you could be any animal, what would you be?

7. What is your most embarrassing moment?

8. If you could meet anyone, dead or alive, who would you meet?

9. What is your dream job?

10. If you could only eat one food for the rest of your life, what would it be?

11. What was your favorite book when you were little?

12. What is your earliest memory?

13. What is the first thing on your bucket list?

14. Would you rather live on the beach or in the mountains?

15. If you could star in any movie, what movie would it be? {eoa}

Mark Merrill *is the president of All Pro Dad and Family First,*

a national non-profit organization. He is also the voice of a daily radio program called "The Family Minute."

For the original article, visit allprodad.com.