

How to Influence Your Teen to Love God

Even the best of parents must make some changes in the way they parent as their children grow up. The old methods of relating don't work the same way anymore. In fact, they seem to cause problems instead.

Of all the changes teens make, the most important one is probably the adjustment in their relationship with their parents. They're moving from a parent-child relationship to an adult-adult relationship. Unfortunately, some parents never make the shift. They continue to treat their teens as if they're still eight or nine years old. Honor helps parents recognize the changes and make the necessary adjustments.

Although you may be able to "control" young children, the key word for teenagers is "influence." Here are five words that describe different ways you can influence teens.

1. Teach—Provide them with new information or help them understand another facet of life.
2. Encourage—Remind them of the benefits of moving in the right direction.
3. Entreat—Earnestly ask them to act in a mature, responsible and wise way.
4. Admonish—Warn, caution or advise them by anticipating possible negative consequences.
5. Persuade—Use relationship, incentives and natural consequences to motivate them to make wise choices.

Remember that you don't have to accomplish everything in one interaction. Change takes time, and your influence over time will produce the greatest results.

This parenting tip comes from the book Say Goodbye to Whining, Complaining, and Bad Attitudes ... in You and Your Kids by Dr. Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, RN, BSN. Chapter 8 is entitled "Helping Teens Through the "Tunnel Years."'