

When Your Teen is Out of Control

One mom felt hurt but considered her thirteen-year-old daughter's meanness as normal. "Aren't children supposed to hate their parents in order to ease the upcoming separation?"

Another mother of a teenager had given up. "You just have to get used to their disrespect. Hopefully some day they'll appreciate you, but for now, there's no chance."

These kinds of misunderstanding of adolescent changes hinder closeness in a family and parents often don't know where to draw the line. Independent thinking is healthy but disrespect is not. Choosing one's own values is important but can't be an excuse for dishonor. Parents who don't realize the difference, miss valuable teaching opportunities.

Furthermore, teens may appear hard but they're still very sensitive. When parents dish it out the same way teens do, teens get hurt. Their understanding of themselves is much more fragile than their actions lead you to believe. Teens are at a prime time for life-altering experiences. An offhand comment by you may make a lasting impression so be careful what you say and how you say it.

There's a reason behind what's going on during adolescence. It doesn't mean that we excuse children, but we don't have to be surprised by the changes either. The stress experienced by families during the teen years can be overwhelming.

Wisdom is required to maneuver through the continual relational land mines. Be patient, look for teachable moments, don't get sucked into futile arguments, and above all continue to pray for your teens. They need it more now than ever.

What are some ways you've been able to connect with your

teen's heart?

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