



## *Positive Parenting - Parent-Child Communication*



### **RAISING GREAT TEENS: PARENT TEEN RELATIONSHIPS**

#### ***Your teen still needs you more than ever***

Although it may seem like your teen doesn't need you anymore, children at this age actually need their parents more than ever. And although it may seem like he isn't listening to what you say, teens do consider their parents' actions, opinions and values when making decisions for themselves. Life gets busier as children get older, and your teen probably spends most of his time outside of school with friends or talking to friends. Although these friendships are important, it is also important to talk and listen to your teen and spend time together as a family.

#### ***How to build a good relationship with your teen***

- **Be actively interested in your teen's life.** Even though your child no longer needs you to arrange her get-togethers with friends, you should still know who her friends are and make an effort to meet their parents. Your teen may be responsible, but you should still know where she is, what she is doing, and who she is with.
- **Talk with your teen, not at him.** Try to avoid arguing with your teen, because as both of you get more emotional, you will be less likely to listen to the other person and more likely to say something you don't mean. If you need to, take a time out from the conversation and come back to it when you both are calm. Try to listen to your teen's emotions and his point of view. Remember that things have changed from when you were a teen.
- **Share things with your teen.** Your teen is old enough to understand what is going on in the world around her. Take your teen to work with you for a day to see what the real world is like. Talk to her about what she thinks she might want to do after high school and encourage her to explore this by taking on an after school job. Let your child know of stressful circumstances, such as if things are tight financially for your family right now. Children see and hear more than we think. Discuss things in the news with your teen.
- **Schedule in family time.** Make sure to schedule some one-on-one time with your teen. Although everyone has busy schedules, take advantage of the short times you have his undivided attention, such as when you both are in the car together, to ask him about school or friends. Even though your teen may be too old for a bedtime story, take a few minutes to sit in his room when you go in to say goodnight and talk about things. Family dinners are important, even when your child is a teenager, so try to make sure you eat together as often as possible, and away from the television! Find an activity that you both can enjoy together, from going to the gym to watching the news together for a half hour every night.