



BRIGHT FUTURES HANDOUT ► PARENT 11 THROUGH 14 YEAR VISITS

Here are some suggestions from Bright Futures experts that may be of value to your family.

✓ HOW YOUR FAMILY IS DOING

- Encourage your child to be part of family decisions. Give your child the chance to make more of her own decisions as she grows older.
- Encourage your child to think through problems with your support.
- Help your child find activities she is really interested in, besides schoolwork.
- Help your child find and try activities that help others.
- Help your child deal with conflict.
- Help your child figure out nonviolent ways to handle anger or fear.
- If you are worried about your living or food situation, talk with us. Community agencies and programs such as SNAP can also provide information and assistance.

✓ YOUR CHILD'S FEELINGS

- Find ways to spend time with your child.
- If you are concerned that your child is sad, depressed, nervous, irritable, hopeless, or angry, let us know.
- Talk with your child about how his body is changing during puberty.
- If you have questions about your child's sexual development, you can always talk with us.

✓ YOUR GROWING AND CHANGING CHILD

- Help your child get to the dentist twice a year.
- Give your child a fluoride supplement if the dentist recommends it.
- Encourage your child to brush her teeth twice a day and floss once a day.
- Praise your child when she does something well, not just when she looks good.
- Support a healthy body weight and help your child be a healthy eater.
 - Provide healthy foods.
 - Eat together as a family.
 - Be a role model.
- Help your child get enough calcium with low-fat or fat-free milk, low-fat yogurt, and cheese.
- Encourage your child to get at least 1 hour of physical activity every day. Make sure she uses helmets and other safety gear.
- Consider making a family media use plan. Make rules for media use and balance your child's time for physical activities and other activities.
- Check in with your child's teacher about grades. Attend back-to-school events, parent-teacher conferences, and other school activities if possible.
- Talk with your child as she takes over responsibility for schoolwork.
- Help your child with organizing time, if she needs it.
- Encourage daily reading.

✓ HEALTHY BEHAVIOR CHOICES

- Help your child find fun, safe things to do.
- Make sure your child knows how you feel about alcohol and drug use.
- Know your child's friends and their parents. Be aware of where your child is and what he is doing at all times.
- Lock your liquor in a cabinet.
- Store prescription medications in a locked cabinet.
- Talk with your child about relationships, sex, and values.
- If you are uncomfortable talking about puberty or sexual pressures with your child, please ask us or others you trust for reliable information that can help.
- Use clear and consistent rules and discipline with your child.
- Be a role model.

Helpful Resource: Family Media Use Plan: www.healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan

11 THROUGH 14 YEAR VISITS—PARENT

✓ SAFETY

- Make sure everyone always wears a lap and shoulder seat belt in the car.
- Provide a properly fitting helmet and safety gear for biking, skating, in-line skating, skiing, snowmobiling, and horseback riding.
- Use a hat, sun protection clothing, and sunscreen with SPF of 15 or higher on her exposed skin. Limit time outside when the sun is strongest (11:00 am–3:00 pm).
- Don't allow your child to ride ATVs.
- Make sure your child knows how to get help if she feels unsafe.
- If it is necessary to keep a gun in your home, store it unloaded and locked with the ammunition locked separately from the gun.

Consistent with *Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents*, 4th Edition

For more information, go to <https://brightfutures.aap.org>.

American Academy of Pediatrics

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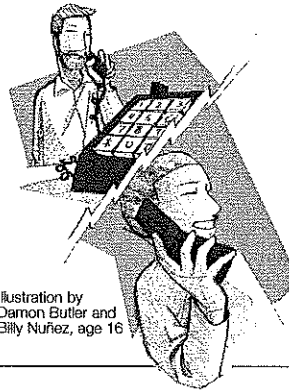


Illustration by
Damon Butler and
Billy Nuñez, age 16

TALKING WITH YOUR TEEN: TIPS FOR PARENTS

BE AN INVOLVED PARENT

- Show interest in your teenager's activities and friends.
- Talk openly, honestly, and respectfully with your teenager.
- Set clear limits and expectations.
- Know what's going on at school and after school.
- Teach your teenager how to safely avoid violence.

Teenagers are no longer children, but they are not yet adults. While teenagers are developing more independent thoughts, feelings, and values, it is only natural for them to question their parents' rules, beliefs, and expectations. During this time of change, parents often worry about their teenager's safety.

Encourage independence while teaching safety.

As teenagers are testing their new independent roles, it's not an easy time for parents. But if teens don't get love, security, and a feeling of safety from their family, they might look elsewhere, even toward friends who are a bad influence, such as gang members. One of the best ways parents can help their teenagers stay safe is to teach them how to avoid violence.

Talking with your teen is one of the most important things you can do to help keep your child safe.

KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON

It's important to understand some of the typical behaviors and feelings of teenagers, even if your teenager thinks you don't!

Teens are very interested in:

- New ways of doing things.
- The present, with little interest in the future. With maturity, the future becomes more important.

Teens often:

- Feel awkward and believe they don't fit in.
- Behave childishly when stressed.

Teens want:

- Role models for themselves.
- To be capable and needed.

SET CLEAR LIMITS AND EXPECTATIONS

Talk about limits to which you can both agree:

- Homework completion and school progress
- How many nights out each week, and how late
- After-school activities or jobs
- Allowance or money
- Safety in and around motor vehicles

Clearly communicate any change in the original limits.

You have specific reasons for deciding to change what was agreed to. You aren't simply giving up because your teen didn't follow the rules.

POSITIVE COMMUNICATION

Good communication—talking and listening—with your teenager may be the most important part of your relationship.

Since teens are forming their own identity and testing limits, some conversations may lead to



disagreements and become uncomfortable. Your goal is to have open, respectful, and honest conversations. Teens need to feel loved and that their point of view is respected, even when you disagree.

Positive communication gives teenagers a chance to:

- Learn how to talk honestly and respectfully with others, even when they disagree.
- Feel more confident in discussing their needs and feelings.
- Know that a positive attitude can keep them safe and out of fights.

Make a habit of talking about whatever makes your teen happy.

No matter what your teen's interest—sports, music, clothing, TV, video games, friends, school—ask questions and learn what's going on.

Try to eat together whenever possible. Mealtimes are good times to talk and listen.

Answer questions directly and honestly.

If you have made a mistake, admit it. "I'm sorry" are very powerful words for a teenager to hear from parents.

Notice your teen's feelings. "You seem upset about your relationship with _____."

Be aware of your own reactions and emotions. Teenagers are great at saying or doing things that annoy their parents. Take time to think about your responses and decisions to your teen's requests.

Offer your opinion without lecturing or judging. Know that you may hear something with which you disagree. Avoid statements like, "That's stupid." or "You're wrong." Try saying, "I hear you, but this is how I see it..."

Give all of your attention. If the phone rings, don't answer it. It also is difficult to talk while doing other things, like watching TV.

Offer assistance. "Is there something I can do to help?"

WHEN TALKING IS DIFFICULT

Yelling, threatening, blaming, and name-calling can only make matters worse. Sometimes teens just don't want to talk with their parents.

Consider helping your teen find other caring adults who share your values. It may be easier to hear advice from one of these other adults.

KEEPING YOUR TEEN SAFE

Know where your child is after school. The most common time for teenagers to get into trouble is between 2:00 and 6:00 PM. If not supervised, this is often when teens fight, use drugs, and have sex.

Talk with your child about carrying a weapon. Carrying a weapon makes people feel bold, leading to foolish behaviors. Carrying a weapon gives a false sense of protection and makes your teen less safe.

Teach your child that it takes more courage to walk away from a fight than to fight. Most young people hurt in fights have been fighting with someone they know. Teach your child how to resolve problems without fighting. Your example is the best way for your child to learn this.

Let your teen know that it is more important to know how to walk away from a fight than how to win one, and that it is possible to stand up for yourself without fighting.

IF YOUR TEEN GETS INTO A FIGHT

Often teenagers who get into a fight are just in the wrong place at the wrong time. Sometimes fighting is the only choice they know.

- Talk about what happened:**
- Find out what caused the fight. This helps avoid future fights. Did it start with an argument? An insult? Was it revenge? Did it result from being robbed? Getting jumped?
 - Listen to the whole story. Try not to interrupt, scold, judge, or problem solve. Just listen.

- Being hurt in a fight can be scary and embarrassing. It's important to pay attention to your teen's feelings.

Find out if the fight is over:

- Help resolve the problem. "Are you still afraid? Are you thinking of getting even? Do you think the other person is looking for revenge?"
- Involve your teen in finding a solution. "What else could you have done besides fight? Is there someone else who can help you and _____ find a solution to this problem?"

Develop a safety plan for the future:

- Change routes to avoid known threats. "Is there another way that you can get home? Can you leave home or school at a different time? Try not to travel alone."
- Guard against robbery. "Always know what's going on around you, especially if you are wearing new clothes or flashy jewelry. It may be better to just hand it over. Things can be replaced; you can't."

- Seek a safe place when being followed. "Walk or run into a store, police or fire station, or any other public building. Tell them it's an emergency and ask to use the phone to call for a ride. Or, go to a friend's home and get inside quickly."

WHEN YOUR TEEN MAY NEED HELP

Your teen may need help if you notice any of the following warning signs:

- Not talking, or a change in communication style
- Feeling down most of the time—losing interest in friends or activities
- Change in school performance, skipping school, or maybe even dropping out
- Trouble with the law

If you or your teenager needs help, please contact your pediatrician.

Connected Kids are Safe, Strong, and Secure

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The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 66,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists, and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety, and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults.

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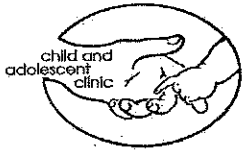
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Child and Adolescent Clinic Child Nurturing Guide



Checking a Teenager's Assets

Parents need to stay in the thick of their teenager's life even during the breaking-away period of adolescence. It is helpful for parents to remain involved, even though they are correct in their thinking that their teenage son or daughter wants privacy and more freedom to make their own decisions. As an adolescent experiments with different behaviors and goes through phases, he is beginning to separate from the family. The idea is to avoid alienating one family member from another during the process and also, to prevent the teenager from attempting dangerous risk-taking behaviors.

THE POWER OF ASSETS

Research has found that these 30 assets noted on the attached worksheet can powerfully protect young people from a wide range of risky behaviors. And the more assets a young person has, the better, because the positive things we want youth to do increase as the number of assets a youth has increases. In addition, as the number of assets a youth has increases, the number of risky behaviors decreases.

IDENTIFYING ASSETS IN YOUR TEENAGER

The following worksheet is designed so that you and your teenager can assess (and talk about) the assets he or she has or lacks. Complete the checklist separately, and then talk about similarities, differences and ways to build new strengths or assets. Parent and teen should each put a check mark next to the assets they feel the teen has. (Assets are different valuable things in your child's life – like money in the bank!)

HIGH RISK BEHAVIORS

The high-risk behaviors that parents and the community want all teenagers to avoid are listed below and are defined:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| ALCOHOL | Six or more uses in past month or got drunk once or more in past two weeks. |
| TOBACCO | Smokes one or more cigarettes every day or uses smokeless tobacco regularly. |
| ILLCIT DRUGS | Six or more uses in the past year. |
| SEXUAL ACTIVITY | Already had sexual intercourse, two or more times |
| DEPRESSION/ SUICIDE | Frequently depressed and/or has attempted suicide. |
| ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR AND VIOLENCE | Two or more acts in the past year. |
| SCHOOL PROBLEMS | Skipped school two or more days in the past month and/or wants to drop out. |
| VEHICLE RECKLESSNESS | Drinks and drives, rides with drinking driver, or nonuse of seat belt. |

Below is a worksheet to assist you and your teenager in evaluating the assets that he has or doesn't have. This can be a comfort to both of you, or it may bring out some concerns that your adolescent is vulnerable to dangerous risk-taking behaviors. Please use it as a way to communicate with your teen and to build new strengths.

TEENAGER'S ASSETS CHECKLIST

| | Parent View | Teen View |
|--|----------------|--------------|
| 1. Teenager receives lots of love and support from his/her family. | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Teenager sees parent(s) as readily available for advice and support. | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Teenager talks with parent(s) about both small and significant matters. | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Teenager has access to adults other than parent(s) for advice and support. | _____ | _____ |
| 5. Teenager talks with adults other than parent(s) about both small and significant matters. | _____ | _____ |
| 6. Parent(s) are involved in helping Teenager succeed in school. | _____ | _____ |
| 7. School provides a caring, encouraging environment. | _____ | _____ |
| Boundaries | | |
| 8. Parent(s) have set standards for appropriate conduct. | _____ | _____ |
| 9. Parent(s) discipline Teenager when rules are violated. | _____ | _____ |
| 10. Parent(s) keep track of where Teenager is and who Teenager is with. | _____ | _____ |
| 11. Teenager goes out for fun and recreation three or fewer nights each week. | _____ | _____ |
| 12. Teenager's best friends model responsible behavior. | _____ | _____ |
| Structured Time Use | | |
| 13. Teenager spends at least three hours each week in music. | _____ | _____ |
| 14. Teenager spends at least an hour each week in school sports, clubs or organizations. | _____ | _____ |
| 15. Teenager spends at least an hour each week in organizations or clubs outside of school. | _____ | _____ |
| 16. Teenager spends at least an hour each week attending religious activities. | _____ | _____ |
| Educational Commitment | | |
| 17. Teenager is motivated to do well in school. | _____ | _____ |
| 18. Teenager aspires to continue schooling after high school. | _____ | _____ |
| 19. Teenager's school performance is above average. | _____ | _____ |
| 20. Teenager does at least six hours of homework each week. | _____ | _____ |
| Positive Values | | |
| 21. Teenager places a high value on helping other people. | _____ | _____ |
| 22. Teenager is interested in helping reduce world hunger. | _____ | _____ |
| 23. Teenager cares about other people's feelings. | _____ | _____ |
| 24. Teenager thinks it's important to not be sexually active. | _____ | _____ |
| Social Competence | | |
| 25. Teenager can stand up for what he/she believes in. | _____ | _____ |
| 26. Teenager is good at making decisions. | _____ | _____ |
| 27. Teenager is good at making friends. | _____ | _____ |
| 28. Teenager is good at planning ahead. | _____ | _____ |
| 29. Teenager has high self-esteem. | _____ | _____ |
| 30. Teenager is optimistic about his/her personal future. | _____ | _____ |

Search Institute® has identified the following building blocks of healthy development—known as **Developmental Assets®**—that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.

| | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| External Assets | Support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family support—Family life provides high levels of love and support. 2. Positive family communication—Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents. 3. Other adult relationships—Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults. 4. Caring neighborhood—Young person experiences caring neighbors. 5. Caring school climate—School provides a caring, encouraging environment. 6. Parent involvement in schooling—Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school. |
| | Empowerment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Community values youth—Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth. 8. Youth as resources—Young people are given useful roles in the community. 9. Service to others—Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week. 10. Safety—Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood. |
| | Boundaries & Expectations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Family boundaries—Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts. 12. School boundaries—School provides clear rules and consequences. 13. Neighborhood boundaries—Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior. 14. Adult role models—Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior. 15. Positive peer influence—Young person's best friends model responsible behavior. 16. High expectations—Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well. |
| | Constructive Use of Time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Creative activities—Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts. 18. Youth programs—Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community. 19. Religious community—Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution. 20. Time at home—Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week. |

| | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Internal Assets | Commitment to Learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21. Achievement Motivation—Young person is motivated to do well in school. 22. School Engagement—Young person is actively engaged in learning. 23. Homework—Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day. 24. Bonding to school—Young person cares about her or his school. 25. Reading for Pleasure—Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week. |
| | Positive Values | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 26. Caring—Young person places high value on helping other people. 27. Equality and social justice—Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty. 28. Integrity—Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs. 29. Honesty—Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy." 30. Responsibility—Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility. 31. Restraint—Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs. |
| | Social Competencies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 32. Planning and decision making—Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices. 33. Interpersonal Competence—Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills. 34. Cultural Competence—Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds. 35. Resistance skills—Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations. 36. Peaceful conflict resolution—Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently. |
| | Positive Identity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 37. Personal power—Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me." 38. Self-esteem—Young person reports having a high self-esteem. 39. Sense of purpose—Young person reports that "my life has a purpose." 40. Positive view of personal future—Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future. |

Expect Respect: Healthy Relationships

Signs of a Healthy Relationship

- Respecting each other
- Knowing that you make each other better people
- Sharing common interests, but having outside friends and activities too
- Settling disagreements peacefully and with respect



Relationships are supposed to make both people feel happy. People should feel good about what happens when they are together.

Respect

- You ask each other what you want to do.
- No one tries to control the other person.

Common Interests

- You enjoy doing things together, but no one feels forced to do anything.
- If you do have a disagreement—and it's OK to disagree—you both get to say what you want, talk until you're both happy, and then go out and enjoy what you've planned.

Being With Each Other or Being Apart

- You enjoy each other's company and feel happy when together.
- You each feel free enough to have your own friends and interests outside the relationship.

Ways To Make Your Relationship Healthy

Respect Each Other

Show you really care by sharing your thoughts and feelings. Listen to what your partner has to say.

Ask About The Other Person's Interests

Talk about sports, music, or movies—whatever helps you get past any awkward feelings and get to know each other better.

Have A Life Outside The Relationship

People are more attractive to each other if they have other interests. Keep up with your schoolwork, friends, and the

activities you enjoy that do not involve your partner.

Resolve Disagreements With Love and Respect

People don't always have to agree on movies, music, or favorite sports, or even on how often to call or see each other. It is only natural for people to disagree. The important thing is how you reach an agreement. With a good attitude, you can have a healthy disagreement.

Signs of An Unhealthy Relationship (/English/ages-stages/teen/dating-sex/pages/Dating-Violence-Tips-for-Parents.aspx)

Feelings of fear, stress, and sadness are not part of a healthy relationship.

Lack of respect

You "go along" with something even if you think it is not right. You feel bad about what happens when you are together.

Being held back

Your partner does not let you succeed in school (/English/ages-stages/teen/school/pages/Poor-School-Performance-How-Parents-Can-Help.aspx), or you are made to feel guilty about doing things that interest you.

Controlling behavior

You may hear, "If you love me, I need to know where you are." Your partner does not care about your friends.

Feeling "crazy in love"

One or both of you calls the other all the time. You feel your partner is possessive and smothering.

Getting blamed for your partner's problems

You hear, "This is all your fault."

Feeling jealous most of the time

A little bit of jealousy is normal. A lot of jealousy, or allowing jealousy to control what goes on between the two of you, will hurt the relationship.

Trying to change the other person's behavior

One of you tells the other, "My way or no way."

When you can talk about a problem, an unhealthy relationship can become a healthy one. But, if you can't find ways to enjoy the time that you spend together, it may mean that it is time to end the relationship.

Crossing The Line

There are some things that should never happen in a relationship. Your relationship has serious problems if any of the following things are happening.

Verbal Abuse

Screaming, swearing, bullying, or calling each other names is never all right.

Pushing, Shoving, Hitting, or Kicking In Anger

Trying To Control The Other Person's Behavior Forced Sex (/English/ages-stages/teen/dating-sex/pages/Date-Rape.aspx)

You always have the right to refuse attention or affection.

Threats

If one of you does not get your way, a threat is made to hurt either the other person or yourself.

Breaking or Hitting Objects During An Argument

If your relationship is crossing the line, the behavior needs to stop right away or the relationship needs to end. If you are having trouble ending a relationship, seek the help of an adult who cares about your well-being.

Talk with an adult you trust about how to end an abusive relationship safely. Use what you have learned to help make your next relationship better.

No Excuse For Abuse

Nothing You Say or Do Is A Reason To Be Abused

When things have calmed down, try saying:

- "I hated it when you swore at me. Don't do that again."
- "Don't treat me that way. I have done nothing to deserve being _____."
- "If you are upset, tell me. I can try to help, but yelling, screaming, and swearing at me does not help."
- "If you treat me like that again, it's over."

Obedience Is Not Respect

Nothing Anyone Says or Does Is A Reason For You To Be Abusive

You deserve to be liked and respected. Using force, power, or control only gets "your way." This is not how to get respect.

If You Push Your Partner Around, You May Get Your Way, But You Lose Your Partner's Respect, Support, and Love.

If You Are Crossing The Line, STOP!

If you can't stop, get help.

- A teacher, coach, or counselor at school can help you learn how to treat your partner with respect.
- A spiritual leader or an adult at an after-school activity or club can help you learn how to control emotions (</english/health-issues/conditions/emotional-problems/Pages/default.aspx>), like anger or jealousy, and avoid abusive behavior.

By changing your behavior, you can get the true respect, support, and love that you deserve.

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Source

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Teaching Teens to Respect Diversity

Respecting diversity involves understanding and valuing the perspectives, behaviors and needs of people from all backgrounds.

Respecting diversity involves understanding and valuing the perspectives, behaviors and needs of people from all backgrounds. The world is a great tapestry of different cultures, abilities, beliefs, genders and preferences, and the ability to respect others sets the tone for the way a person approaches their interactions and relationships. As society becomes more diverse, your adolescent will most likely be exposed to people from various backgrounds, and it is good to teach her about the value of respecting differences.

Expose your middle-schooler to different cultures and backgrounds. You are a great influence in your child's life, and by having diverse friendships and being respectful of people's views and backgrounds, you will be providing her with a valuable lesson in tolerance. You can also help build your child's ability to respect differences by encouraging her to participate in activities that promote diversity and nurture tolerance. Find local cultural events, like parades or celebrations, and bring the whole family to enjoy the festivities. These types of events can be a fun way to introduce your adolescent to new cultures and help her gain awareness of the diverse history of our country. You may also want to sign her up for summer camp, an art workshop or a peer program that includes people from all backgrounds and abilities. For example, there are many programs out there that allow children to mentor or become "buddies" with children with special needs. You can contact your local children's hospital to learn more about which programs exist in your community as well.

Teach your adolescent about the need to be open-minded. People all have different experiences, backgrounds, customs, opinions, points of view, genders and preferences, and it's good to talk to your child regularly about the importance of being accepting of others. Neurologist Judy Willis says that helping your adolescent become open-minded about differences can build her mental flexibility, problem-solving abilities and sense of tolerance. Willis suggests that you talk to your middle-schooler about the beliefs of those involved in social problems and ask her to consider what historical figures would think about these current issues.

Talk about bullying. Bullying is a growing concern for children at this age, and by teaching your child about respecting and honoring differences, you are also helping to prepare her to respond to bullying in an assertive way. Bullying is often linked to prejudice, as the targets of bullies are often people who are considered “different” by their peers. Name-calling, physical harassment, hurtful comments online and being left out of cliques are some of the most common ways middle-school students are exposed to bullying. Education consultant Jennifer Miller recommends that you prepare your adolescent with responses to bullying behavior. Often young people are caught off-guard and don’t know how to respond to bullying. Miller suggests that you work together on what your child can say to stop the harassment and allow her to remain respectful of herself and others. Sometimes, it’s as simple as saying, “Stop, you know you’re wrong,” with some assertion. Or she can say, “You know you are out of line,” if the bully is harassing another person, and then she can leave the area and tell an adult who can help the victim. By reminding your adolescent that others’ opinions and feelings are valid even when they are different from her own, you are helping to raise an open-minded child who has the courage and skills needed to stand up against bullying.

WATCH FOR SIGNS – Stop Youth Suicide

“If a young person you know seems depressed or gloomy and has been spending a lot of time questioning why life is worth the bother, it’s time to pay attention.” Anonymous Parent (son lost to suicide)



THE FACTS:

- ❖ Between 2003 and 2007, 539 Washington State youths completed suicide – an average of two youth suicides each week.
- ❖ Youth suicides outnumber youth homicides in Washington State.
- ❖ Between 2003 and 2007, 4,269 Washington State youths were admitted to the hospital for non-fatal suicidal behavior – an average of 16 admissions per week.
- ❖ Boys and young men are significantly more likely to complete suicide – this is partly a result of using more lethal means – while girls and young women are more likely to make suicide attempts that result in hospitalization.
- ❖ 30% of Washington State 10th graders reported feeling so sad or hopeless in the past year that they stopped doing their usual activities.
- ❖ 26% of all 10th graders indicated that it was unlikely that they would seek adult help if they were feeling depressed or suicidal. More than 30% indicated that they did not have adults they could turn to if they were feeling sad or depressed.

Youth suicide is a significant problem in our state. There are warning signs you can watch for – and specific actions you can take – to help prevent young people from taking their own lives.

Learn how to recognize these warning signs, the “clues” that a young person might be considering suicide, and how to let them know you care.

Youth of all races, creeds, incomes, and educational levels attempt or complete suicide. There is no typical suicide victim. About 80% of the time people who kill themselves have given definite signals or talked about suicide. The key to prevention is knowing what the warning signs are, and what to do to help.

WARNING SIGNS:

Most suicidal young people don’t really want to die – they just want their pain to end. There are several signs to watch for that may indicate someone is thinking about suicide. The more signs, the greater the risk.

- A previous suicide attempt.
- Current talk of suicide, or making a plan.
- Strong wish to die, preoccupation with death, giving away prized possessions.
- Signs of serious depression, such as moodiness, hopelessness, withdrawal.
- Increased alcohol and/or other drug use.
- Recent suicide attempted by a friend or family member.

There are other key "risk factors" to keep in mind that increase the likelihood of suicide attempts by young people. Again, the more signs observed, the greater the risk.

- Readily accessible firearms.
- Impulsiveness and taking unnecessary risks.
- Lack of connection to family and friends (no one to talk to).

PREVENTION STEPS:

If you're worried about a young person and suicide has crossed your mind as a concern, trust your judgment. Do something now! Here's what you might say to a young person who is thinking about suicide:

1) SHOW YOU CARE: Let the person know you really care. Talk about your feelings and ask about his or hers. Listen carefully to what they have to say.

- "I'm concerned about you ... about how you feel."
- "Tell me about your pain."
- "You mean a lot to me and I want to help."
- "I care about you, about how you're holding up."
- "I don't want you to kill yourself."
- "I'm on your side ... we'll get through this."

2) ASK THE QUESTION: Don't hesitate to raise the subject. Talking with young people about suicide won't put the idea in their heads. Chances are, if you've observed any of the warning signs, they are already thinking about it. Be direct in a caring, non-confrontational way. Get the conversation started.

- "Are you thinking about suicide?"
- "Are you thinking about harming yourself, ending your life?"
- "What thoughts or plans do you have?"
- "How long have you been thinking about suicide?"
- "Have you thought about how you would do it?"
- "Do you have _____?" (insert the lethal means they have mentioned)
- "Do you really want to die? Or do you want the pain to go away?"

3) CALL FOR HELP: The first steps toward instilling a sense of hope are: showing your concern, raising the issue, and listening to and understanding the young person's feelings. Keep moving forward, together. Call for help.

- "Together I know we can figure something out to make you feel better."
- "I know where we can get some help."
- "Let's talk to someone who can help... let's call the crisis line, now."
- "I can go with you to where we can get help."
- "You're not alone. Let me help you."

If the young person has expressed an immediate plan, or has access to a gun or other potentially deadly means, do not leave him or her alone: **GET HELP IMMEDIATELY!**

Please call your local **CRISIS LINE** at 360-425-6064 or 1-800-273-TALK
TEEN TALK: call 360-397-2428 or text 360-984-0936

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Avoid Becoming a Victim of Human Trafficking!

By *Robin Rossmanith* | Submitted On August 11, 2010



No one wants to be a victim of human trafficking. Human trafficking is when a person is forced, coerced, or tricked into doing work against their will. There are many forms of human trafficking, also known as modern day slavery, which exist in the world today. Two main categories are forced labor, as in the making of goods or working in agriculture fields against your will or because of indebtedness to the employer, and sex trafficking, or forced prostitution and pornography. No one wants to be a slave, yet there are 27 million people enslaved in the 21st century.

Unlike the transatlantic slave trade, modern slavery is not the backbone of western civilization or in something easily recognized. But those who hold others captive and force them to work against their will are making profits off this crime. In fact, human trafficking is estimated to be a 32 billion dollar industry.

Some schemes that may seem legitimate, but are used to lure people into captivity include seasonal farm workers, hotel and restaurant work, domestic servants, nannies, and student travel programs. There are many reputable organizations that provide these types of employment and educational programs. However, traffickers routinely use the lure of paying jobs and an education to separate their victims from their money (for travel visas and recruiting fees) and family. Once separated a trafficker may sell the individual to another or force them to work off "travel debt" such as transportation, food, and housing. This debt is at astronomical interests rates, which accumulate daily, and can never be paid off.

Victims of human trafficking come from all walks of life and all financial status. But there are some factors that make a person more vulnerable to the false lies of a human trafficker. Some factors of vulnerability are:

- Being a female
- Being a child
- Coming from a marginalized population
- Poverty
- Growing up in an abusive home
- Running away from home
- Little or no education.

Protect yourself from becoming a victim of human trafficking.

Although changing the above vulnerability factors is difficult, there are some things to do to avoid becoming a human trafficking victim. Be aware of how traffickers recruit people. Traffickers make false promises of a better life. They paint unrealistic pictures of what life could be like with lots of money. They quickly befriend a person showering them with gifts and displays of affection, particularly recruiters who will later force a girl into prostitution.

Do not make decisions under the influence of substances and do not be the company of people you do not fully know and trust while intoxicated. Traffickers, looking to put someone into prostitution, will take advantage unconscious people or someone who cannot fight being transported elsewhere. Traffickers will also attempt to take advantage of those with addictions or attempt to create drug dependency.

If someone, whether stranger or acquaintance, promises something that seems too good in return for sex or free work, wait. Listen to the intuitive voice inside your head, check with family and friends for advice. Do internet searches or background checks on the person wanting you to go with them. Say no and see how they react. Look for signs of abusive or possessive behaviors. Is the person trying to isolate or turn you against family and friends? If so, avoid that person.

Runaways are at particular risk for being forced into prostitution. If leaving home because of abuse try to find a safe place; Forsaken Generation has resources to locate shelters. Or call the runaway switchboard at 1800-Runaway for help. If you are already on the streets try to find a safe place like Children of The Night.

If coming from a life of poverty the lure of a better income or education is hard to resist. Check and double check if the agency or recruiters are reputable. Do they have references from people living where they want to send you? Make sure all contracts signed are in your native language, to understand all the details. Ask lots of questions. Find out, from another source, what a reasonable travel and recruiting expense would be. Ask for pictures of housing and names of people, companies, or schools that can be contacted. Human traffickers will typically avoid those who are asking too much, they want easy targets. Someone looking for a legitimate employee or student will honor the questions, knowing that you would be a valuable employee or student.

Protect your children from becoming victims of human trafficking.

Be aware of your child's online friends. Sex traffickers have been documented using social media like Facebook and MySpace, in addition to others. Love your children unconditionally. Sometimes awful problems exist between parents and kids; seek help through counseling, mentor programs, and rehab if necessary. Traffickers prey on runaways and throwaways. Do not make your child one. Life on the streets is extremely dangerous.





None of the above suggestions are foolproof. However, if these suggestions are implemented then fewer people would become victims of human trafficking. Evil exists in the world. Protect yourself and family.

Robin Rossmanith created the website, [<http://www.ShopToStopSlavery.com>] to empower consumers to fight human trafficking. She operates Shop To Stop Slavery and is also the co-chair of the Northeast Florida Human Trafficking Task Force.

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Parent Resources for Children 13-14 years old

There are so many resources available online for parents. Who do you trust? Here are some links approved by your pediatrician, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Healthy Children.org has a wealth of information for parents, including a Symptom checker, ideas for challenging your child to grow in development, and answers to questions about care of your child. https://www.healthychildren.org/English/Pages/default.aspx</p> |  |
| <p>When Your Child Needs Emergency Care – What to do? https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/injuries-emergencies/Pages/When-Your-Child-Needs-Emergency-Medical-Services.aspx</p> |  |
| <p>Is there a gun where your child plays? Have the conversation before your child visits a new house. https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Handguns-in-the-Home.aspx</p> |  |
| <p>Drug abuse prevention starts with a conversation between a parent and a child. Here are some suggestions on how to talk with your children. Help them say NO to drugs. https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/substance-abuse/Pages/Drug-Abuse-Prevention-Starts-with-Parents.aspx</p> |  |
| <p>How to set up Parental Controls on all your young teen’s devices. https://protectyoungeyes.com/</p> | |
| <p>Parents Guide to Media – best games, apps, books, for all ages. https://www.common sense media.org/</p> | |

If you don't have a QR code reader on your phone, try these:

Apple iPhone: Go to the App Store and search for “QR Reader”. It’s free; no ads.

Android: Go to Google Play Store and search for “QR Code Reader”. It’s free; no ads.