

"Parenting tips"



- ✂️ Children need you to be their parent, not their friend. Parents can be very close and friendly with their children, but it is always your right and responsibility to establish structure and set limits, even when these limits make you unpopular or "un-cool." If children don't receive structure at home, they may one day get it from the police--or possibly never get it at all.
- ✂️ Set boundaries - kids always resist limits and rules, but they need them and (even though they may not admit it) really want them. Often, adolescents push limits as a way of learning where the limits are. Limits provide a basic sense of security and predictability for both kids and parents.
- ✂️ Rules and boundaries should be clear and consistent, and consequences should be predictable.
- ✂️ Rules and boundaries are more effectively accepted and internalized when kids are provided with clear explanations and allowed to discuss the reasons for rules and limits (even if they don't initially agree with them).
- ✂️ Rules and boundaries can be amended when appropriate or necessary. Responsible behavior should lead to greater freedom and trust; irresponsible behavior should lead to restrictions on freedom and more careful monitoring. Help your child understand how their behavior essentially dictates how much freedom and autonomy they earn.
- ✂️ Initially saying "no" and then eventually giving in typically teaches children that relentless nagging will wear you down. When kids don't realize that "no means no," it's probably because it doesn't.
- ✂️ Know your child's friends - many of our grandparents told us that they could know a person by the company he/she keeps, and they're right.
- ✂️ Get to know the parents of your child's friends - If your child is going to a party, make sure the party is supervised and that you've spoken directly to the parents who will be in charge. Kids will sometimes say "if you call their parents you'll embarrass me and I won't go." If that's the case, they're better off not going. Besides, you'll be giving the other parents the message that it's OK for them to call you.

- ✂️ Talk to your child. Always. Even when you think they're not listening, they probably are. If you think that giving the same message over and over is not getting through, remember that the messages they receive now are likely to be repeated by them to their children--so do it for the sake of your grandchildren.
- ✂️ One of the best times to talk to your child...while you're driving in your car (a guaranteed captive audience).
- ✂️ If you want to know what's going on in adolescent culture today and your child does not want to talk...try talking to their friends. You might find that other children are much more likely to talk to you about adolescent issues *in general* (but don't expect them to incriminate themselves). By keeping the focus on general issues in adolescence, you will appear genuinely interested in their world--as opposed to investigating them or digging for private information about your child.
- ✂️ Rewarding positive behavior is preferable to punishing negative behavior.
- ✂️ Kids don't come with an "owner's manual," but see this link on *developmental assets* to learn how to cultivate specific characteristics that correlate with health, responsibility and success. Click [HERE](#)
- ✂️ If you discover alcohol, drugs or paraphernalia in your child's room and they say it belongs to a friend, they're lying.
- ✂️ Never, ever, think that your child is not at risk. ALL kids are at risk.
- ✂️ When you think your child has absolutely lost his/her mind, they're probably perfectly normal (see link to the [The Teenage Brain](#)).
- ✂️ If you have any questions or concerns about your child, ASK. Reach out to school counselors, other parents, etc.
- ✂️ Join the Park Ridge *Parents Educating Parents* (P.E.P.) support group -



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