



Surviving the Teenage Years

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Change isn't easy, and the years when your child is becoming an adult won't be a stress-free time for either of you. There are bound to be ups and downs, but there's a lot you can do to help build and maintain positive relationships.



Top Tips
Teen's Perspective
Parent's Perspective
Count to 10

Teen's perspective:

1 Just talk to me

You only ever seem to talk to me to tell me to do this or not to do that! If you talked **to** me instead of **at** me you'd find out that I have opinions about all sorts of things - politics, the environment, music, films.... You don't know me anymore because you never just talk to me.

2 Just listen to me

You want me to open up to you but how can I if you don't listen to me properly? Start with the assumption that my feelings and my point of view are as valid as yours - then stop talking, listen and think about what I'm saying.

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3 My independence

I am not your little boy/girl anymore. Recognise my need for some independence. Please allow me to be who I am; not who you want me to be.

4 My confidence

You say you're 'just teasing' but do you know how hurtful you can be? I want to be able to come to you with my problems but you need to stop treating me like a joke. Instead, give me support, encouragement and a little respect.



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5 Calm down

Calm down and show me how to control my feelings by controlling yours. Shouting means you are out of control, not me. Who/how can you hear if everyone is yelling?

Parent's perspective:

1 Work as a team

If you and your partner have different parenting styles it can feel frustrating. Work out your differences in private, and then tackle the issues together. You both want the same thing – a happy home.

2 Rules & Boundaries

Identify the important rules and stick to them: going out and coming in, helping around the house, how they treat their siblings etc. While they're learning to be adults, boundaries can keep them safe. Also, 'my parents would kill me!' can be a good get-out clause for them when they're dealing with peer pressure.

3 Ask yourself, “Is this argument really worth it”?

When your temper starts to fray ask yourself, “Is this really worth it”? Perhaps clothes, hair, tidiness, etc. just aren't worth fighting about – especially when there are other struggles and stresses going on.

4 Talking about the big stuff

Make discussions about sex, drugs, alcohol, peer pressure and money feel normal. If you find it difficult, practice talking with your partner or a friend till you can chat about this naturally. You can use examples from TV, social media or school to get the conversation started. Be careful not to lecture. You want to know their views and opinions so make it a two-way conversation.



“Sorry but...”
is not an
apology.

5 **Say SORRY with
no ifs and buts.**

Parents are the most influential teachers when it comes to learning how to repair relationships effectively.

Apologising for your role in a situation does not mean you have to assume responsibility for the whole situation. Be a role model for your teen.

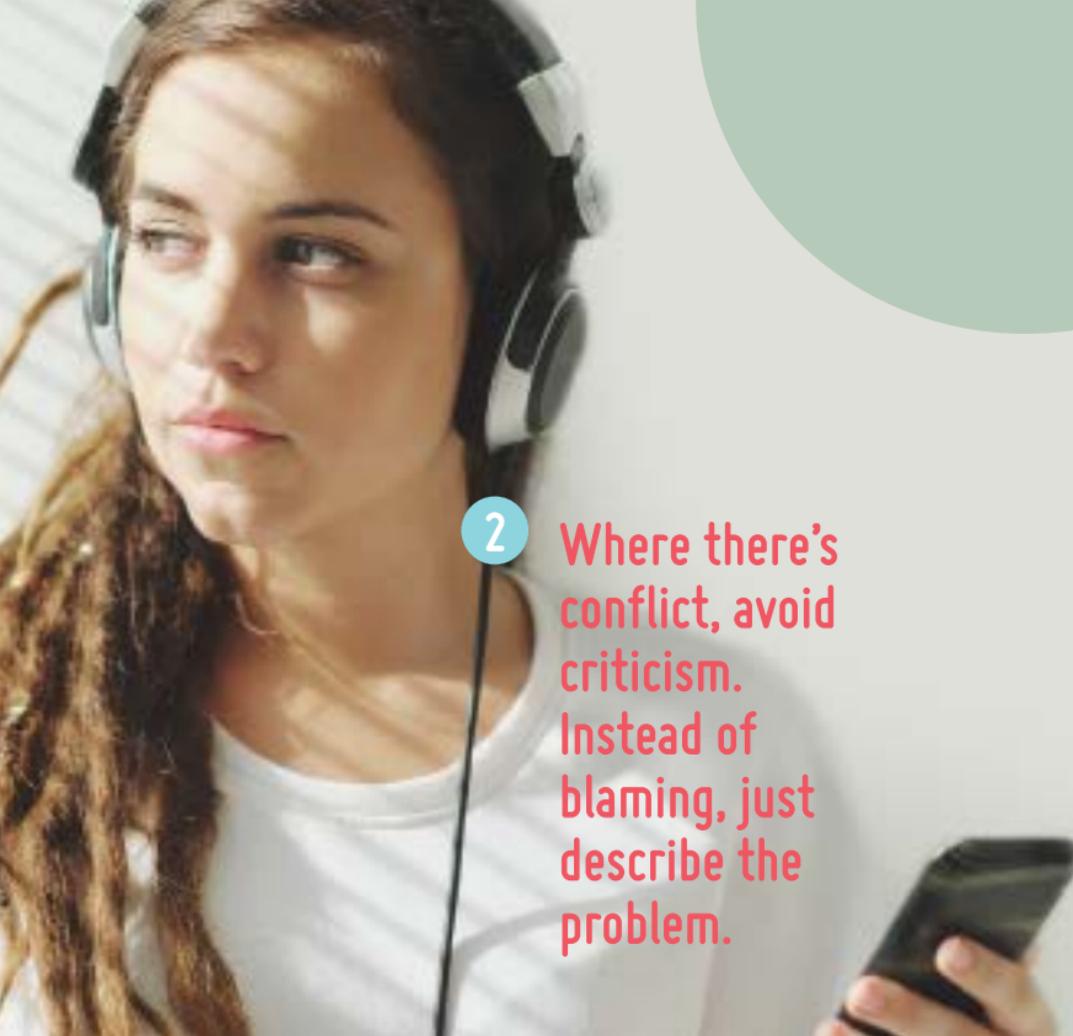
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Count to ten

Anger is natural. Hormonal changes and the very normal need for your teenager to push the boundaries mean you both can end up frustrated:

- 1 Spot the early signs that you're 'losing it'. Take a minute, breathe, slow down and steady your voice.





2 Where there's conflict, avoid criticism. Instead of blaming, just describe the problem.

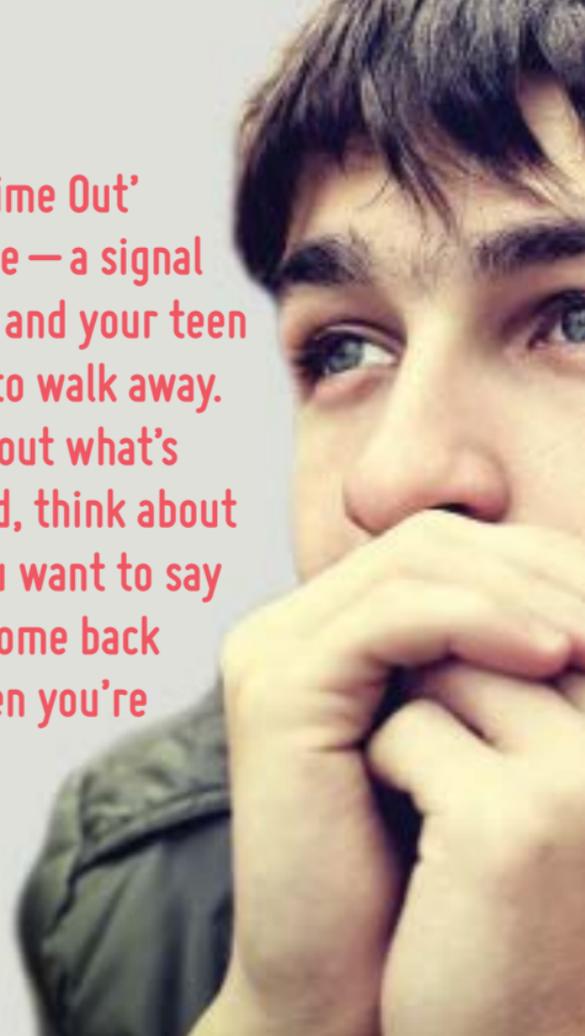
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3 Watch your timing. Are you tired? Hungry? In a rush? If you want to broach a subject you think might be sensitive, pick a good time.

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- 4 Help your teen express their anger by asking them to calmly explain how they feel. The more you both talk and listen about all kinds of things, the easier this will be.

- 5 Find a 'Time Out' technique — a signal that you and your teen can use to walk away. Think about what's been said, think about what you want to say — then come back to it when you're calmer.





Call the Relationship Helpline on:

0808 802 2088



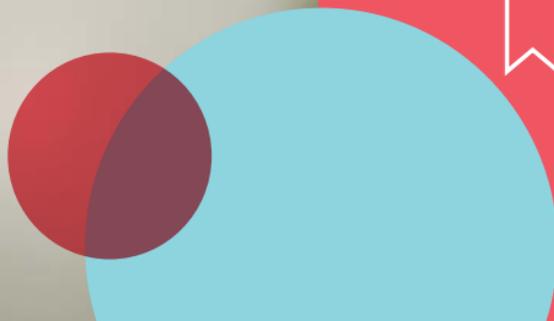
Chat to a us online:

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Make a counselling enquiry:

0808 802 0050





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