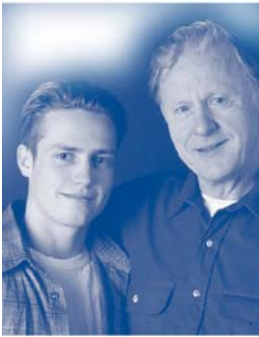


It's Not Easy Being The Parent Of A Teen



Have you ever noticed that your teen's approach to daily living appears to be based on 20% reality and 80% dreams. Unfortunately, a parent's approach to life may be just the opposite! (Thomas W. Phelan PhD) The potential for problems with these differing view-points is monumental. Few parents can say that bringing up a teen-ager is easy.

Our 80% reality may be filled with aging parents, budget juggling, health issues, maintaining a job and trying to keep some semblance of organization and repair to our home. Life gets very stressful when you add to this the worry of a teen and their difficulties at school, with friends, parties, curfews and activities. At times it may feel like your time to relax and dream is impossible to find. Your teen, however, seems to have ample time to space out, do nothing, and experiment with all manner of clothing, appearance and entertainment.

How will you survive this period of life and still keep your sanity?

Perhaps being the parent can feel less stressful if we:

- Recognize that all parents struggle with "letting their teen go" when the previous job as a parent was to "hold on" and keep them safe.
- Understand that even when we are right –we are wrong! Teen-agers would rather fail on their own than give in to parental advice. They may even follow your advice, but they won't tell you that they did.
- Accept that all teens lie at times –it does not mean they are bad!
- Remember that most teens have stolen something in their short lives –it does not mean they are headed for a life of crime.
- Know that many teens go to places that they know you would not approve of – this may be simply curiosity and it does not mean that they want to live that way.
- Recognize that a teen without any problems or a teen who behaves all the time may have problems later in life because they never tested out parental standards or values when young enough to fail and learn with parental support.

How do we know what is a big problem or what is a dream gone sour for your teen? Sometimes when you are in the middle of the confusion it may be wise and a sign of strength to ask for help. Your E.A.P. Program has counsellors who specialize in parent- teen relationship problems. One phone call may be the answer you need to keep life with a teen in perspective.

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