

How do I reconnect with my teenager?

As they enter adolescence, peer relationships become the center of your teenager's life. As adolescents start to develop their own sense of identity, they begin to distance themselves from their families and spend the majority of their time socializing with friends. This transition is often exciting for teenagers, but presents concerns for parents who are worried about the effects of peer pressure on their children. Unfortunately, if children begin to associate with rebellious peer groups, they often make choices and decisions against their better judgment in an effort to fit in and gain a sense of belonging.

Although they'll be the last to admit it, adolescents still rely on their families for support and guidance. During this crucial developmental stage, it is important for parents to establish communication and a strong relationship with their teenagers. When setting aside some time to talk with your teenager, remember to respect each other, even your differences. Allow your teenager to express their opinion without feeling judged. Look for common ground even in the midst of your differences to strengthen your bond. Establish that you are always willing to offer guidance and support even if your teenager discloses making poor choices. Get to know who your child spends time with and always know where they are and when they'll be home. The more contact you have with your teenager, the stronger your influence will be when they have to make a tough choice and stand up to peer pressure.