

# 10 Tips for talking to Teens about Relationships



- 1 ASSESS YOUR OWN VALUES BEFORE TALKING**
  - think about the values that are important to you
  - clarify your expectations for teens in a relationship
  - communicate those values and expectations with your teen
  
- 2 DISCUSS YOUR DATING GUIDELINES**
  - know where your teen is going, who they are going with, and what time they will be home
  - teach them proper social skills, manners and etiquette
  - know that you can say "no" to unreasonable requests
  
- 3 REVIEW SAFETY MEASURES**
  - set curfews together
  - suggest dating in groups and in public places
  - encourage them to phone home if plans change or the need arises
  
- 4 GET TO KNOW THEIR DATE & FRIENDS**
  - encourage your teen to invite their friends to spend time at your house
  - know the phone numbers of their friends' families
  - ensure that house parties will be supervised
  
- 5 SHARE THE POSITIVES & CONSEQUENCES OF RELATIONSHIPS**
  - teach teens that dating can be pleasurable, but also be realistic about possible consequences
  - talk with them about sexuality to ensure they have knowledge
  - have discussions about the influences of alcohol and drugs

6

## TEACH PROBLEM SOLVING & NEGOTIATION

- give them the opportunity to make decisions at home
- allow them to practice the "give and take" of negotiation
- teach them that accepting another person's point of view is sometimes O.K.

7

## ENCOURAGE ASSERTIVENESS, NOT AGGRESSIVENESS

- teach your teen to state their feelings, opinions, desires and reactions clearly
- encourage them to listen to other views respectfully
- encourage them to follow their own "head and heart"

8

## TEACH ANGER CONTROL

- encourage them to talk about their feelings
- discourage name-calling, blaming, insults or violence
- encourage them to walk away to cool down

9

## EXPLAIN THE DANGER OF SECRETS & VIOLENCE

- teach your teen that jealousy and control are not part of a healthy relationship
- teach them that secrecy can be the first sign of manipulation and if it isolates them from friends and family, it is not acceptable
- help them to realize that things like pushing, hair-pulling and emotional/verbal abuse are acts of violence

10

## BE THE ULTIMATE ROLE MODEL

- actions speak louder than words
- if you want your teen to learn to respect themselves and others, it is critical that you respect yourself, your partner and other people
- teens learn by observing those around them, especially their parents

