

Williams County Parent Resource Center

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Who is this teenager and what have they done with my sweet child?

“Listen earnestly to anything your children want to tell you, no matter what. If you don’t listen eagerly to the little stuff when they are little, they won’t tell you the big stuff when they are big, because to them—all of it has always been big stuff.”

~Catherine M. Wallace

Positive Parenting with Your Teens

When your children hit their teen years, you might feel like you been hit too, right between the eyes! Hormones and attitudes change dramatically starting around 12 years old. These changes can lead parents to feel like they are walking on egg shells. One minute your teen is happy and talking and the next, they are rolling their eyes and tell you “whatever”. As tempting as it is to “put them straight” arguing, demanding, and pushing will only create a relationship of resentment.

On the CDC website, there are lots of positive parenting tips. Here are a few for teens:

- Be honest and direct with your teen when talking about sensitive subjects such as drugs, drinking, smoking, and sex.
 - Meet and get to know your teen’s friends. (Tell your teen they are welcome to hangout late if they are at your home.)
 - Show an interest in your teen’s school and extracurricular interests. Encourage them to be involved with sports, music, theater, and art.
 - Help your teen make healthy choices while encouraging them to make their own decisions.
 - Respect your teen’s opinions and take into account her thoughts and feelings.
- It is important that she knows you are listening. Listen without playing down her concerns.
- When there is a conflict, be clear about goals and expectations (like getting good grades, keeping things clean, and showing respect), but allow your teen input on how to reach those goals (like when and how to study or clean).
 - Compliment your teen and celebrate his efforts and accomplishments.
 - Show affection for your teen (maybe not in front of their friends). Spend time together doing things you both enjoy.
 - Talk with your teen and help him plan ahead for difficult or uncomfortable situations. Discuss what he can do if he is in a group and someone is using drugs or under pressure to have sex, or is offered a ride by someone who has been drinking.
 - Encourage your teen to develop solutions to problems or conflicts. Help your teenager learn to make good decisions. Create opportunities for him to use his own judgment, and be available for advice and support.
 - Respect your teen’s need for privacy.

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Williams County Parent
Resource Center

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What did you just say? Swearing and what to do about it.

It's shocking to hear your child swear, even worse when it's directed at you. How do you stop this behavior? It helps to know where the swearing comes from. There are several possible reasons why kids swear:

- To feel like a grown-up. When kids hear adults swear it's always in an attention getting tone of voice. People react. Emotions are on high. The air crackles with static. Kids try out cuss words to see if they can create the same atmosphere and get the same kind of imagined respect. Young kids are just playing mynah bird.
- To get attention. Once a child uses a bad word and gets a startled and immediate response from the adults around him, he realizes what a powerful tool it can be.
- To prove independence. Kids are trying to prove they are separate from you, and that you don't control everything about them. Since you can't possibly control what comes out of their mouths this is an area where they may rebel.
- To gain peer acceptance. Kids want to be accepted by their peers. Often, swearing is seen as "cool," so cursing is just a way for a kid to try to fit in with the crowd.
- To mimic what they see on TV or in the movies. Kids are easily affected by their environment. If they have a "role model" who curses, they will sure enough try it themselves.

What is the solution?

The first step is to review the reasons kids swear and determine which one is the fuel for your child's fire. Once you understand where this is coming from, you can use one or more of the following tools:

- Set calm limits. Often, a parent's choked responses will actually encourage a child to repeat foul language. A simple, calm approach works better. "Tom, that is not a word children use. You may say, "oh drat" instead." If the child persists, choose a quiet time to express your feelings, and set specific limits. Discuss why people swear, define what swear words are, and explain why they aren't acceptable in your family. Outline the future consequences for bad language, - and follow through calmly next time it happens.
- Teach acceptable alternatives. Some kids have a hard time understanding and expressing their angry feelings. Their lack of wisdom leads them to believe they are the only ones that ever feel this way and that their feelings are bad or wrong. It helps kids when we allow them their angry feelings, even as we set limits on their behavior. As an example, when a kid is crying over a punishment, how many parents offer "Give you something to cry for"? But the kid already has a good reason to be unhappy! A better response might be, "You're welcome to be angry with me—upstairs in your bedroom with the door closed." If the child then stomps off to his room, don't yell at him for doing so. It's a healthy way for him to express his feelings. When a child curses at you, immediately offer an alternative, "that language is unacceptable. You may say, "I'm so mad at you" or "I disagree with you".
- Praise good behavior. When your child responds to anger in an appropriate way, make sure you acknowledge it. "I see that you are very upset and you are handling it very well." (Taken from Circle of Parents)

Playing With A Purpose!!

Who says learning has to be boring? These games are fun and interactive. They allow you to be intentional with the time you spend with your children. You can help them develop skills that they might be struggling with in a fun way.

and silly and less on the competition. It's a great one because it can be "rigged" so the child has success and the whole family can get in on the fun.

1. **Telephone.** This game is great for increasing communication and listening skills. It also requires physical proximity and learning how to regulate your volume. There's low pressure because half the fun is messing it up.
2. **Water or Nerf gun fights.** This is a great one for older kids. The key is to make clear rules that you may only shoot someone after asking their permission. This game helps everyone feel like they have a voice and gives practice using good communication in a fun atmosphere.
3. **Go Fish!** This is another game that gives great practice in asking questions with respect. There are lot of variation that can make it a math reinforcement game as well such as making pairs that add to a particular number instead of making matches.
4. **The Mirror Game.** In this game, two people stand facing each other. One person leads and the other person mirrors what the leader does. Take turns being leader. Being able to give a child control in an appropriate environment can help with control in other areas. This game gets bonus points because it often also fosters eye contact and attunement. Don't forget to work on facial expressions when you're the leader to help boost that emotional quotient.
5. **Active Listening.** One person draws a picture or builds something from a construction toy. Then he uses words to get another person to duplicate what he's done. The second drawer or builder can ask as many clarifying questions as necessary to make sure he's following the directions properly. Besides honing communication skills, this is also effective practice for kids who struggle with spacial intelligence.

7. **Mystery Drawing.** Take turns drawing simple shapes, letters, or words on each others back and see if you can guess what is being drawn. This is a great game if your child normally is averse to touch.

For parents with Hearing Impaired Children, Hands & Voices is dedicated to supporting families with children how are Deaf or Hard of Hearing without bias around communication modes or methodology. They are a parent-driven, non-profit organization providing families with resources, networks, and information they need to improve communication access and education outcomes for their children. Their outreach activities, parent/professional collaboration, and advocacy efforts are focused on enabling Deaf and Hard of Hearing children to reach their highest potential.

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This article was taken from Parentingwithconnection.info. Here are some other great parenting websites.

Focus On The Family
Hand in Hand Parenting
Mind Positive Parenting
Fatherhood.gov
Parent Further

There are so many positive websites that uplift and encourage. Take a minute to life yourself!!

Upcoming Parent Workshop Opportunities

PRC Lending Library

The lending library has books, CDs, and DVDs available for checkout. There is information on all parenting topics including discipline, setting limits, ages and states, separation and divorce, routines and transitions, temperaments, and Love and Logic materials.

Topic Bags

We also offer topic bags that are available to parents, teachers, counselors, child care providers and other professionals. The bright red bags contain materials for adults and kids. There is one topic per bag. Topics are: Autism Spectrum ADD/ADHD, Anger in Children, Divorce, Long Distance Parenting, Parenting Solutions –Youth/ Adolescence, Sex Education and Body Safety, Sleep Issues (infant-Teen), and Toilet Training.

Parents Forever (1Session)

Meets ND Requirement for Divorcing Couples (cost of \$55.00)
October 11, December 13, Feb 14th, April 11, June 13
8:30 am —12:30 pm

Building Strong Families (6 sessions in 6 weeks)

This program helps families find their strengths, build on those strengths, and learn skills to create stronger families improve relationships, and increase communication.
Tuesdays 6:30 PM—8:30 PM
October 7—November 11

How Much Is Enough? (6 sessions in 3 weeks)

The impact of childhood overindulgence can be staggering. In this workshop you will learn three common ways parents overindulge, learn how to implement firm structures and rules to steer your children towards a healthier sense of responsibility.
Mondays and Wednesdays 6:30—8:30 PM
October 27, 29, November 3, 5, 10, and 12th

Common Sense Parenting of Toddlers/Preschoolers (7 Sessions in 7 Weeks)

A practical approach to parenting with sessions on child development, reasonable expectations, nurturing, consequences, effective praise, social skills, preventive teaching, time-out, corrective teaching, staying calm and more.
Wednesdays 6:30—8:30 PM
January 14—February 25th

Coming soon:

Basic Beginnings

Building foundations for child's growth and development.

Active Parenting for Teens

Learn how to successfully usher your children through their teen years.

Registration and more information at:

www.ag.ndsu.edu/pen

or call 701-713-0663

**Pre-registration
required for all
workshops!!!**

