

Setting Expectations for your
Emerging Teenager:
Motivating Your Child to be
Responsible and Engaged

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Agenda for the evening

- Why sometimes certain methods don't work
- Why teens aren't motivated by rewards, punishments, or pleas to logic
- Why teens decide to change
- What you can do to encourage this change
- How to never argue with your teenager about school/behavior

*There are two major
directions that
parents take when
trying to motivate*

Applying external
consequences (for example,
incentives or punishments)

Words, words and more
words, delivered with
increasing intensity

WHAT DOES NOT WORK
AND WHY?

Motivation does not mean giving a pep talk speech

- ❑ The reaction to over-enthusiastic cheerleading, especially for teens who are demoralized or disheartened is actually demotivating
- ❑ They don't think you understand since their belief is less capable than you think about them
- ❑ This does not mean to go to the other end of the spectrum

Carrot and stick approach does not always work

- ❑ Change does not occur only for the purpose of avoiding pain or achieving a reward—specifically for durable motivation
- ❑ Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results does not work

Our understanding of the relationship between motivation and performance is inaccurate

- ❑ When I get motivated, I'm going to _____
- ❑ Fundamental flaw is that one must become motivated in order to perform
- ❑ We complicate the change process by taking a one step process and making it a two step process
- ❑ We don't get motivated and then do something, we do something and then get motivated

The goal then is doing something to get your teen to perform instead of working towards changing the mind of your teen

When behavior changes, minds change

How do you do this?

It's about developing motivation in your relationships rather than seeing motivation as an individual trait

Truly motivational relationships are not those where there is a one-up position but rather genuine partnerships

But one person does not motivate another.

It's about helping them discover their own motivation and tap into what is meaningful to them

Durable motivation is intrinsic

WHY DO TEENS CHANGE?

Motivation=Change Oriented Movement

Motivation is a matter of
change and change is directed
toward behavior, not thinking

1. The teen associates change with something of intrinsic value
2. The teen is able, willing and ready to change
3. The teen is in an environment (relationship) that is marked by safety, acceptance and empowerment

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO
CREATE A MOTIVATING
RELATIONSHIP

- The single most important component of a motivating relationship is that your child can express any thought or emotion to you and you will accept it without evaluation or criticism
- Acceptance DOES NOT mean that you will tolerate any behavior, it simply means that you will not automatically and immediately challenge their thoughts

- ❑ One of the rarest of human experiences is to be truly listened to by another person. This is really rare for teens
- ❑ A fundamental part of human relations is summed up in the statement: acceptance facilitates change. If you want someone to change, begin by accepting them as they are. It is the acceptance that frees people to be able to change

Indecisiveness

- ❑ It is normal for people to want to change and not want to change at the same time
- ❑ It is useful for parents to understand this in their teens
- ❑ Through nonjudgmental conversation with a parent, teens have the opportunity to think about their situation, goals and sense of satisfaction
- ❑ One of the more motivational things you can do is to help your teen resolve their indecisiveness

Stages of Change

Precontemplation Stage Teens
Ask "What If" type questions

- What would be different if your grades improved?
- What will happen if things continue in their current direction?
- What would your friends think?
- How would improved grades/behavior change our relationship?

Contemplation Stage Teens

Instead of giving pep-talk, say *Gee, I don't know. What do you think about that?*

This does 2 things: one it states that you are not the expert and are not going to dictate the answer; and two you are interested in their view of the situation

So avoid cheerleading, offer no plans or advice and listen

Preparation Stage Teens

Show interest and curiosity but stop short of interrogation

"Oh that sounds interesting. Tell me more about that"

Teens may move back and forth between contemplation and preparation. Change does not occur on a straight line

Action Stage Teens

Inquire about how this success has been for them

Resist the urge to cheerlead, the discussion needs to be about the teen and what they feel

They will still inevitably make mistakes, be there if they need to ask you questions, but resist putting your stamp on their efforts

Maintenance Stage Teens

In this stage, change has been maintained for 6 months

You are on the right track! Keep doing what you have been doing

THE PATH TO NO MORE
ARGUING

Use these steps to ensure no more arguing

1. Cooperation instead of conflict

2. Elicitation instead of dictation

3. Self-direction instead of other-direction

4. You do not have to go to every argument you are invited to

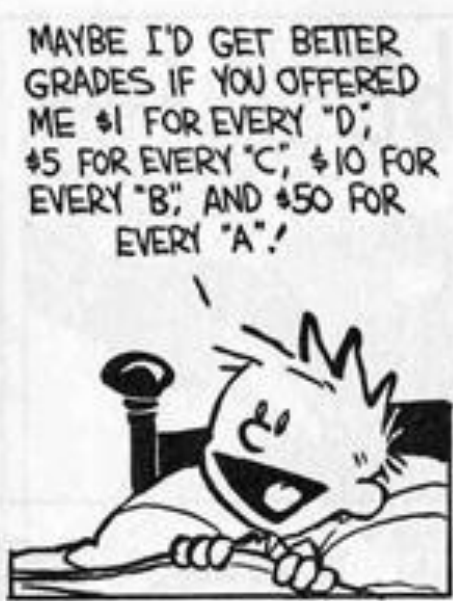
Remember that as much as you encourage, advise, direct, suggest, recommend, or attempt to persuade your children, you cannot make them do anything.

When teens disappoint us or fall short of our hopes for them, an automatic tendency is to blame ourselves. Avoid this parental trap.

Give yourself the luxury of being a human being

If you are interested in more details on what was discussed tonight

Check out "Motivating Your Intelligent But Unmotivated Teenager" by Dennis Bumgarner



QUESTIONS??????

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