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PARENTING THE (PROBLEM) TEENAGER



Welcome to being a parent of a teenager. Prepare for a large amount of eye rolling, emotional outbursts, & thoughts of running away. And that's just the parents.



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Who is the 'real' me?

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- Do you really know your teenager?
- How has your teen changed?
- What is making you afraid that you are doing things wrong?

The Different Phases of the Adolescent

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- Early Adolescence (11 – 13 years)
- Middle Adolescence (14 – 18 years)
- Late Adolescence (19 – 24 years)

Early Adolescence – identity changes

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Age period – 11 – 13 years

- **Physical** – Pubertal changes – conscious of body, voice, what others may see
- **Cognitive** – many different interests at any one time
- **Socio-emotional** – Awareness of differences; awkward; self-assertive at times



Middle Adolescence (most difficult)

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Age Period – 14 – 18 years

- **Physical** – Heightened body awareness; sexual identity develops; chooses a sexual identity
- **Cognitive** –fluctuations in ability; self-doubt
- **Socio-emotional** – emotions fluctuate-withdrawn; rebellious; introverted OR loving; social; extroverted



Late Adolescence (emotional maturity)

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- **Age Period** – 19 – 24 years
- **Physical** – more acceptance of body image
- **Cognitive** – may have ideas of what his/her Career would be
- **Socio-emotional** – steady relationships; has defined his/her sexuality; has a ‘persona’



WHAT IS YOUR PARENTING STYLE?

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- How do parenting styles affect the developmental stages of the adolescent?
- What kind of parent am I?
- Am I **authoritarian** OR **authoritative**? What is the difference?



Different Parenting Styles

- **Authoritarian** - Obedience-driven. Many behavioural rules; often seen as punitive and restrictive. **GOAL**- Let teenagers know who is the boss. Angry when teenagers do not follow directives.
- **Authoritative** - Relationship – driven. Strong behavioural principles. Clear boundaries- builds sense of self-efficacy. **GOAL** – self-directed teenagers. They know you mean ‘business’ and trust and respect your decisions.
- **Permissive** - Reaction – driven. Unclear boundaries and few demands on teenagers. **GOAL** – keep teenagers ‘happy’ and friendly with you.

Understanding why teenagers misbehave

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- Teenagers who are *chronically disruptive* have low levels of self-esteem and rarely achieve academically.
- They are more prone to drinking, smoking and other delinquent behaviours.



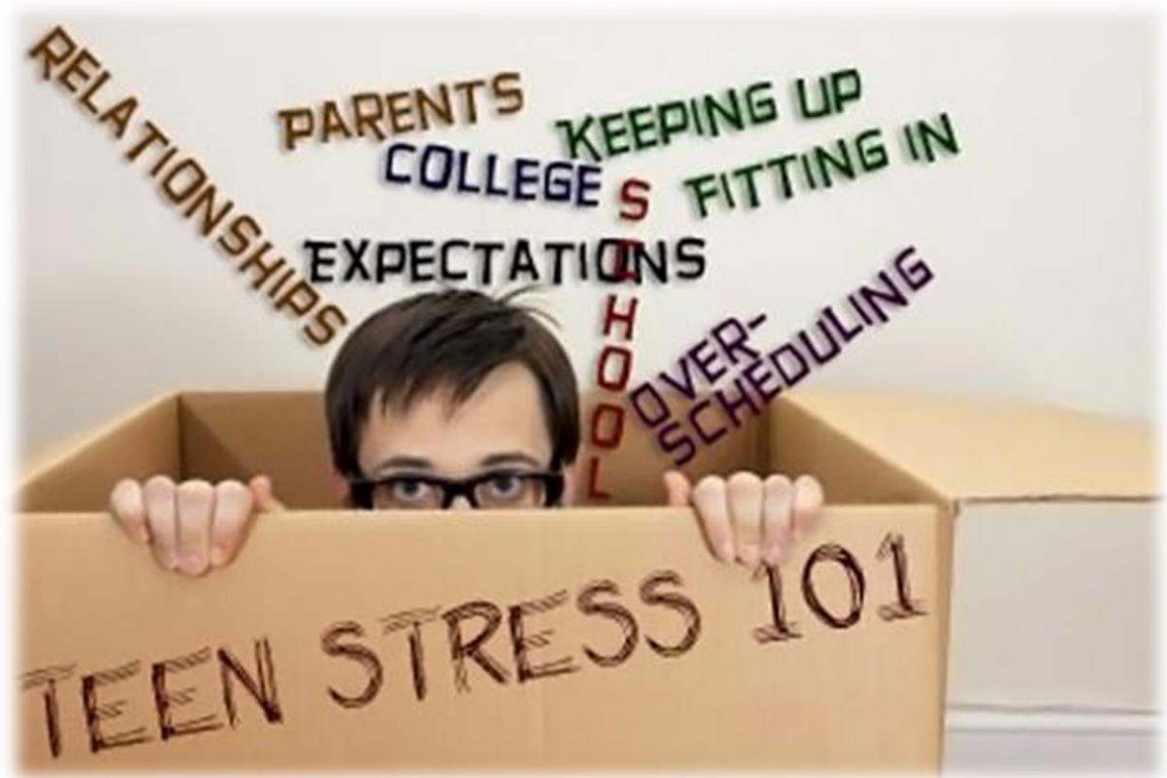
“How are you?”

Broken. Useless. Alone. Clueless.
Confused. Betrayed. Fragile. On the verge
of tears. Depressed. Anxious. About to
break down. Really give up. Pathetic.
Annoying. I'm just a burden. Distant.
Lonely. Bitter. Heartbroken. Lonely.
Rejected. Crushed. I feel like I'm going to
just fall apart at any moment. Empty.
Defeated. Never good enough.

Problems that Teenagers Face

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- Substance Abuse- Drugs, Alcohol, Pain Killers
- Peer Pressure
- Self-Harm
- Physical Abuse
- Dysfunctional Families
- Divorce
- Parental Separation
- Relationships
- Depression
- Suicidal Ideas
- Diet and Fitness
- Date Rape
- School Life
- Mental Health



How to Recognize Problem Behaviours

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AGGRESSION

Look for:

- Permissive/authoritarian parenting
- Peer group influences
- Associated learning or attention problems
- Cognitive deficits
- Modeling in family
- Depression

Considerations :

- Develop competencies in areas of deficit
- Evaluate whether this behaviour occurs across situations
- **Authoritative Parenting** recommended



How to recognize Problem Behaviours

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Noncompliance

Look for :

- ❑ Permissive Parenting
- ❑ Difficult adolescent temperament
- ❑ Oppositional defiant disorder (ODD)
- ❑ Lack of consequences- teenager accustomed to ‘getting away with it’

Considerations :

- ❑ Additional penalty for non-compliance/arguing is necessary
- ❑ Parent must not set self up by ‘asking’ adolescent to do something; ‘telling’ in a nice way is sufficient



How to recognize Problem Behaviours

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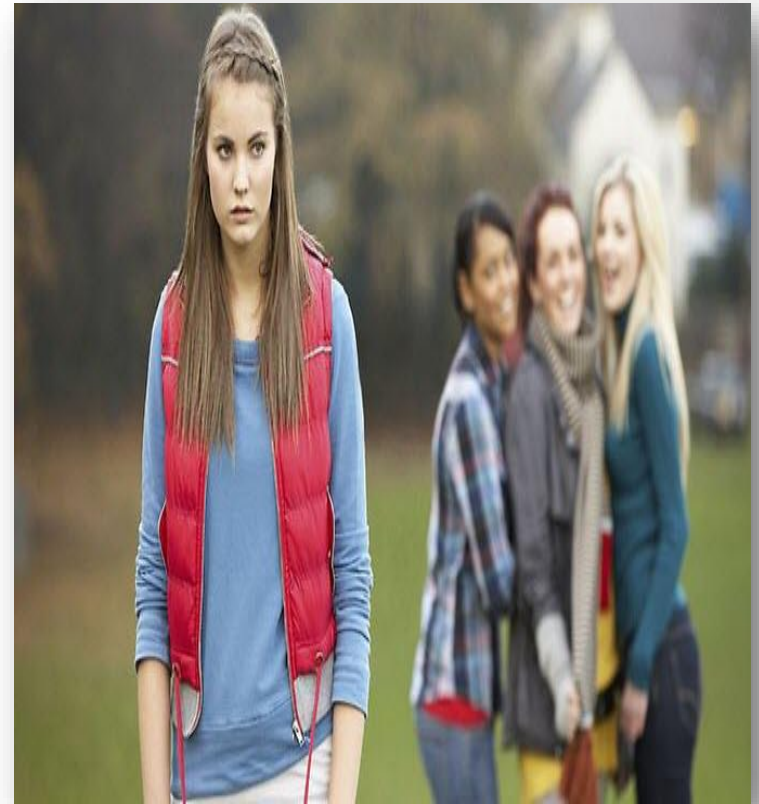
Anti - School Behaviour

Look for :

- Learning disabilities
- Peer difficulties
- Teacher-adolescent conflict
- Control issue
- ODD

Considerations :

- Address development of competencies in areas identified as problematic (academic subjects, peer interactions)
- **Consistent home-school interaction;** parents must be 'on board' with measured consequences.



The INTERVENTION Method

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1. Identify the Problem
2. Define Positive behaviour
3. Describe the Choices
4. If the problem Behaviour occurs
5. If the Problem does not occur
6. Follow up.



The Intervention Method for Parents

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What Parents /Teachers can do:

- Listen attentively
- Avoid arguments
- Make suggestions instead of demands
- Choose your battles wisely
- Ask questions BUT don't force them to give answers
- Aim for a **win-win** situation

Your teenager CAN be helped!

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- Help starts with YOU!
- You have to be the catalyst for change in your teenager's behaviors.
- Are there changes that YOU may need to make also, in YOUR own behaviours?

Teenagers Forum

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Questions for you!

1. What are the difficulties/challenges that teenagers face today?
2. Do you think that your parents understand you? Why? /Why not?
3. What strategies do teenagers use(both your friends and you), to cope with their challenges?
4. What should parents do to help teenagers cope better?



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Take care of your Teen!

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Thank you.

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