

# Positive Parenting

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## Teen Talk

For **Teen Talk**, teenagers have been asked to suggest ways to improve communication with their parents. This information was compiled from a questionnaire given to the students in several grade 8 classes.

**1. What could your parents do to make it easier for you to talk to them?**

- they can be more open with me and think of my position
- listen to everything I have to say without cutting me off
- they should pay more attention to me
- they should ask me how things are going
- spend time alone with me

**2. When do you suggest you and your parents talk?**

- we should talk every day
- after school, during supper time or when I'm settling down
- when I bring the matter up and feel comfortable
- if I'm upset or lonely
- when they're in a good mood

**3. How should your parents talk to you about an event or an activity without sounding like they're prying?**

- just ask for my opinion about it
- ask more like a friend
- don't make any assumptions about what I'm saying
- don't ask too many questions

**4. How should your parents remind you to do your work? (homework, housework)**

- they should just ask me or tell me
- they should leave me a note
- we should have a schedule of when to do things
- they shouldn't have to remind me

**5. In what way should your parents give you advice?**

- tell me calmly and politely
- only if I ask for advice
- only when I really, really need it
- if they know I'm getting into a bad situation

**6. When you have "messed up", how would you like your parents to react?**

- by not yelling and getting angry
- they should not spank me or slap me
- by being understanding and supportive
- in a nice calm way

**7. Why do you want to be part of setting the rules?**

- because they apply to me
- it makes me more responsible
- it makes me feel important
- so I know what the guidelines are
- so I know the rules are fair and I agree to them
- so the rules suit me
- so I can add some of my own rules

**8. What are appropriate consequences?**

- it should depend on what I did wrong
- losing privileges – phone, T.V., video games, my favourite activity, my allowance
- being grounded (2 to 7 days)
- a lecture
- being sent to my room
- not being able to see my friends
- paying a fine
- doing chores
- no violence

**9. What is a good curfew/bedtime for a weekend/school night?**

A great range of times were given for this question but the times listed below were most common. A couple of students even suggested no curfew or bedtime should be imposed.

- curfew – school nights 9:00/10:00 p.m., weekends 10:00/11:00 p.m.
- bedtime – school night 10:00/11:00 p.m., weekends 11:00/12:00 p.m.

**10. How do you feel when your parents “put you down”?**

- angry
- ashamed and unwanted
- awful even if I know they don’t mean it
- I feel I have to retaliate
- like I’m no good
- like I want to leave for a long time
- unloved
- let down
- insulted and hurt
- sad and depressed

**11. Pet Peeves???**

- if they don’t say thank you when you do good things
- if my mom cuts me off when I am trying to explain something
- when I’m treated like a child
- if they bother me when I’m already occupied
- when they make fun of me or laugh at me
- when they show off in front of my friends
- when I’m blamed for something I didn’t do
- if they are too protective

**Tip:** Listen to your teenagers and value their opinions.