

EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATE!

When talking with your teens, show them you care by...

- ♦ asking questions
- ♦ listening to their words
- ♦ validating their feelings
- ♦ encouraging them
- ♦ educating them on healthy relationships and how to spot red flags
- ♦ helping them to brainstorm effective solutions when problems arise
- ♦ letting them know they can always come to you and you will accept them for who they are.

****Let your teens know they are worthy of only the best partners or friends!**

Produced by Deb Kleist, Masters of Counseling, Certified School Counselor.

RESOURCES

Need Help? Want more Information?



Acknowledgements

The Amanda Forum is a Caring Place Initiative sponsored by The United Way of Porter County



United Way of Porter County



**THE AMANDA FORUM:
LET'S START TALKING TO
OUR YOUTH!**



24-Hour Crisis Line: (18 and older)
219-464-2128

Youth Dial 911 for all Emergencies

Non-emergency resources:

Loveisrespect.org

Call: 1-866-331-9474

Text: LOVEIS to 22522

To contact The Amanda Forum:

bessien@thecaringplacenwi.org

219-464-0840 ex. 100

Facebook.com/TheAmandaForum

Instagram: @DareToDateSafe

<http://www.thecaringplacenwi.org>



Parents, Let's Be Real...

As your sons and daughters enter the world of dating, it is natural for you to experience some anxiety and want to sit them down and tell them how to choose a "nice boy" or a "nice girl." It is natural to fear they will make a mistake that could result in disaster. You want to tell them all there is to know about what to do and what not to do, what to expect and not expect, what to accept in a relationship and what not to accept. You want to save them any pain or missteps. Your heart is already racing, just reading this. How do you say exactly the right thing at the right time? How do you "facilitate" this important conversation with your "youth?!" And if you are the survivor of an unhealthy relationship or even a violent, abusive relationship, your anxiety for them is that much more elevated. You may want to crumple up this flyer and throw it at the wall if I tell you to relax..... But here goes:

Relax! As difficult as this will be, it is essential that your demeanor when you have these conversations is relaxed and open. You will not be perfect. No one is, but have the conversations and listen so you can learn and educate at the same time. Here are some Do's and Don'ts to help.

HOW TO FACILITATE CONVERSATIONS WITH YOUTH ABOUT HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Do:

Set aside one-on-one time to do something fun together....perhaps away from the public eye and where it takes 20-30 minutes to get there. The talk can happen in the car.

Be certain both you and your child are at ease and not in a power struggle, argument, or disciplinary situation at the time.

Ask a few key questions and really listen to their answers without commenting until they have finished speaking and there is at least a 10 second pause.

Make only comments which demonstrate you heard and respect them "Wow, it sounds like he really listens when you talk, and you love that!"

If they bring up a problem with a relationship, ask them what they think they might do to solve it.

Stop when your teen seems ready to stop talking. Say, "Thanks for sharing that with me!"

Give your child articles, books, or flyers about healthy relationships. Tell them they deserve only the best.

Don't:

Try to talk with your child about their relationships when you are angry or overly emotional.

Fire one question after the next at your child. Ask one or two thoughtful questions.

Lecture. A one-way conversation will not benefit anyone.

Try to use teen lingo on your child to relate to them. It's ok to go to the urban dictionary to figure out what in the world they are saying sometimes, but telling your child, "Hey I know you think this Ship is Goat, but even your Peeps think you should Curve on this one" is probably not going to make your child want to talk to you!!!! (see momydady.com for translation)

Judge and try to solve your child's problem with your solution. Help them come up with their own solution.

Try to make your child be who you want them to be. Listen to who they are and show that you love them unconditionally.

Be hard on yourself. Just trust yourself when conversing with your teen.