Parent Adolescent Conflict
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As a parent of an adolescent, you can expect some conflict between you and your child. The good news is that most parent adolescent conflicts are not about major differences in basic values. In fact, most parent adolescent conflict deals with family life issues like doing household chores and fighting with siblings. These types of conflicts typically occur less often as adolescents move from middle school to high school, though conflicts may get more intense with age. As adolescents get older you can also expect that conflicts concerning homework and technology (e.g., cell phone, computer, and/or video game purchase and use, etc.) may become more frequent. There may be occasional challenges over core values: This often happens because adolescents are checking to make sure the parent really believes in those values. A successful way that parents with adolescents can handle such challenges by their adolescents is to restate the values and remind them why they feel these values are important.

Here are some tips for handling conflict with your adolescent:

- Make it clear that a parent’s job is to be an adult source of support and advice, not a friend.
- Invite and encourage your child to discuss their problems and concerns with you when they are ready to have a calm and thoughtful discussion. Give them time alone to think through the issues if they need it.
- Remind your child of the possible short- and long-term consequences of their actions and of any possible resolutions to their conflict. During adolescence, the part of the brain responsible for making wise decisions has not fully developed yet, and adolescents may need to be reminded often about why certain types of behavior and rules are necessary.
- Remember that you are not invading your child’s privacy by asking about her whereabouts, her activities or her friends. This is part of your job as a parent.
- While most conflict can be handled through good communication, sometimes professional help is necessary. Seek help if you or your child become violent and can’t control their actions, or if you suspect that you or your child is in physical danger.

Remember that adolescents need their parents’ wisdom that has come from experience. Sharing this wisdom is another way to express parental love!

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