

THE BEAUTY OF PROBLEMS

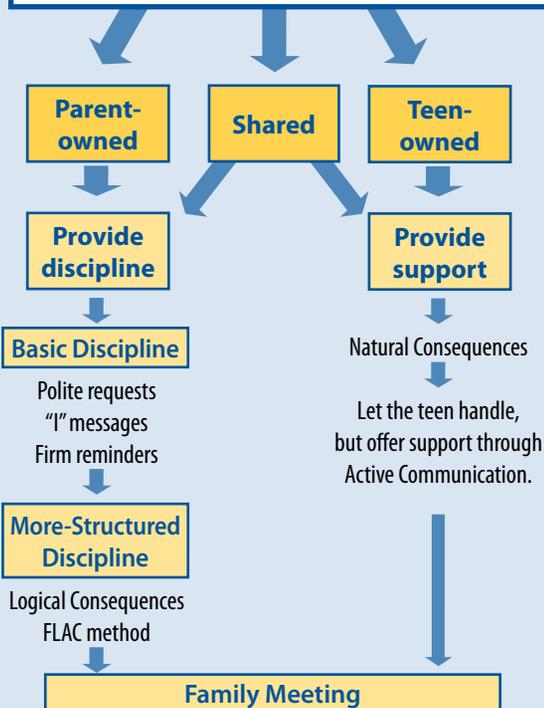
Every family has problems and conflicts. Rather than thinking of these as negative events, you can approach them as opportunities for teaching responsibility, cooperation, courage, and respect. The following model will help you handle problems effectively before they escalate out of control.

THE PROBLEM-HANDLING MODEL

First, determine...

Who owns the problem?

- Whose goal is being blocked, or who is raising the complaint? That person usually owns the problem.
- Does the problem involve health, safety, or family rules/values? If so, then it belongs to the parent.
- Is the problem reasonable for your teen to handle? If not, then either the parent owns it or it is shared between teen and the parent.



And no matter who owns the problem...
Encourage, encourage, encourage!

Supplement this video with the Active Parenting of Teens Parent's Guide

The 256-page Parent's Guide is a unique how-to book that provides:

- in-depth information about the Active style of parenting and complete explanation of skills taught in the videos.
- insight into today's teen issues such as online behavior, bullying, peer pressure, and gangs.
- valuable strategies for preventing high-risk behavior around drugs, sexuality, and violence.
- examples, charts, memory tools, and activities to help you put your new parenting skills into action.

...and much more!

GO ONLINE FOR MORE!

Continue your Active Parenting experience at www.activeparenting.com/ParentingTeens for the latest in parenting news.

Active Parenting has created a special place on our Web site just for parents of teens! The Parenting Teens page provides parents with information on topics that concern you and your teen. Plus, you'll have the opportunity to communicate online with other parents who share your experiences and concerns.

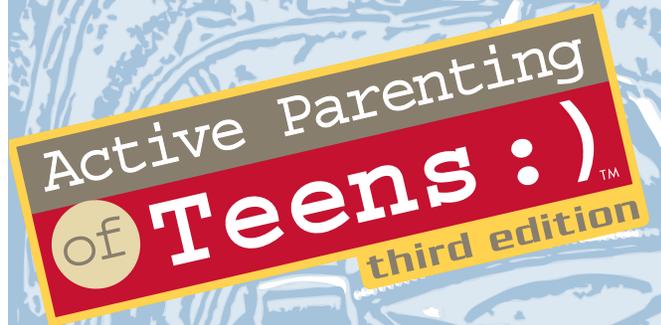
The Parenting Teens page gives you access to:

- dates and locations of upcoming Parenting Workshops in your area.
- a list of resources to point you in the right direction when you need more information on teen issues.
- a quiz to determine your parenting style.
- a Parents' Discussion Forum.
- a Parents' Bookstore with lots of useful resources and fun stuff.



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VIDEO 2:

Winning Communication

BY MICHAEL H. POPKIN, PH.D.

Active Communication

1. Listen actively.

Give your full attention. Keep your own talk to a minimum. Acknowledge what you are hearing, and show that you understand. Ask questions to clarify.

Use ACTIVE LISTENING Skills:

Attention ■ Acknowledgement ■ Empathy

2. Listen for feelings.

Listen with empathy, and try to determine what your teen is feeling. Reflect those feelings back to your teen to help her recognize those feelings and to connect her to the event.

Use FEELING WORDS:

"You seem angry."
"That must have been disappointing."
"It sounds like you're confident about this."

3. Look for alternatives/ Evaluate consequences.

Help your teen come up with solutions. Encourage her to evaluate and predict the consequences of each option.

Use the "PALMS-UP" METHOD:

Instead of solving the problem for your teen, turn your palms up and say,
"I don't know what you'll decide to do, but let's come up with some options."

4. Encourage your teen.

Once your teen has a potential solution to her problem, a word of encouragement from you can help give her the courage to put it into action.

Encourage, encourage, encourage!

"Great job!"
"You've got a good attitude about this."
"That's a creative solution."

5. Follow up later.

Ask your teen how she handled the problem and what results followed. If the outcome was good, encourage. If not, start the Active Communication process again.

The follow-up:

"How'd it go?"
"Did it turn out the way you wanted?"
"That's great!" or "What do you think went wrong?"

Cooperation:

Two or more people working together in a mutually supportive manner for a common goal

Communication is the road to cooperation.

Dictators **DEMAND** cooperation.

Doormats **HOPE** for cooperation.

Active parents **WIN** cooperation.

The 3 Channels of Communication:

Tone of Voice

Words

Nonverbal Cues



When all three channels carry the same message, the communication is very clear and powerful.

Avoiding Communication Blocks

A *communication block* is any word, tone of voice, or body language that influences a person to stop sharing a problem. The best way to avoid these blocks is to learn to recognize your most common pitfalls and guard against using them. Some examples of communication blocks are:

commanding ■ advising ■ placating ■ criticizing ■ focusing on mistakes
interrogating ■ distracting ■ "psychologizing" ■ being judgmental ■ perfectionism
sarcasm ■ moralizing ■ being a "know-it-all" ■ negative expectations

Family Enrichment Activity: Letter of Encouragement

A message often carries more impact when you "put it in writing." Write a letter of encouragement to your teen this week. Keep these guidelines in mind:

- Write about a specific improvement.
- Write only truthful comments.
- Write what you appreciate or enjoy about your teen.
- Include how his behavior has been helpful to others.