

*"Some of my friends moan that their parents are too busy for them, but my mum's great - she always finds time to talk to us about stuff and makes us feel special. I know I can talk to her about anything."*

## **Make them feel great!**

Positive parenting is about bringing out the best in your child, by listening and understanding, praising and encouraging their efforts, noticing and rewarding good behaviour and doing things together that you both enjoy.

In trying to be helpful, it is often easy to point out where a child is going wrong and forget to notice the things that go right. By doing this you are giving your child a lot of attention for the unacceptable things that they are doing, rather than the good things you would prefer them to do. It can also undermine your relationship with your child.

Parental attention and praise affects children, so you need to use it in the right direction!

Not only will this have an effect on your child's behaviour in a positive way, it will also make your child feel happy, loved, wanted and secure. This is the basis of life long confidence and self esteem.



Teenagers have to learn to make their own decisions and establish their independence from their parents.

Unfortunately their decisions may not always fit in with yours. That is why tension is normal. Choose your battles and let some go! Be friendly and supporting; let them know that you have been through it and that you are always willing to listen.

The main concern for teens is whether what they are going through is normal. Remember to give them the practical information they need about physical and emotional changes, and reassure them that their development is perfectly normal. Keeping your child fit and healthy is something most parents do without even thinking about it. Whether it involves getting your child to brush their teeth, or reminding them to pay attention to their personal hygiene, you are an important source of information and advice, and a role model for your child.

A sense of self-esteem is your child's best protection from other difficulties. You can help to make them feel good about themselves in many ways; by being a good role model, giving good feedback, understanding and helping your child, and being natural and affectionate.



### **Warning Signs:**

There may be none. Is your child eating well? Getting enough exercise? Any changes in how they act? Is your child trying to tell you something? Are they constantly unhappy, with mood changes and temper tantrums?



### **Action:**

Be involved and develop a good relationship with your child before they reach their teens.  
Keep a healthy lifestyle.  
Do things together.



### **What to say:**

With younger children, set rules.  
With teenagers, remember that you are in charge. Even if you only get a grunt, don't give up on talking.



### **Prevention:**

Be a little crazy!  
Have fun with your child.  
Try to get them to make friends and have outside interests.  
Listen carefully to your child's point of view.  
Help them think through choices.

## **Contacts:**

**Family Lives:** 0808 800 2222 [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)

**Beating Eating Disorders:** 0845 634 1414 [www.b-eat.co.uk](http://www.b-eat.co.uk)

**Young Minds:** 020 7089 5050 [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)