

# Effective Communication

## With Teens



- **BUILD POSITIVE MEMORIES AND MOMENTS IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP**  
Take time to spend time outside of conflict making positive memories. This could be cooking a meal or talking in the car. If you have multiple children, it is important to find time to spend with your teen child.
- **NO PERSONAL ATTACKS and FOCUS ON THE ISSUES**  
It is easy to place blame, attack, or call names during a conflict. This is not healthy for your relationship. In conflict, you are modeling how you want your child to respond and handle conflicts in the present and future. It is important that you model healthy communication. Use I-Messages to convey how you feel. State facts and concern to convey your message. It is important to focus on fixing the issues, not attacking the person.
- **BE AN ACTIVE LISTENER**  
Listen to what your child wants to say and reflect their feelings. Communication needs to be two-way. You can communicate your expectations, but make sure you leave time to listen to them as well. Your child will be more willing to listen when they feel heard.
- **TIMING IS EVERYTHING**  
Make sure you are able to communicate in a respectful way before beginning. If you need to cool off or contemplate, tell them. It is good to model healthy coping of emotions. If you jump into an argument, you might say things you don't mean.
- **ADDRESS ONE ISSUE AT A TIME**  
Giving your child a laundry list of their irresponsible behaviors might be too much to handle at once. Prioritize your issues and address them one at a time.
- **LEARN FROM MISTAKES**  
When you are both calm, it is important to talk about how you both want to be treated during times of conflict.
- **BE CLEAR ABOUT YOUR EXPECTATIONS**  
Make sure your child knows what you expect ahead of time. Communicate these clearly and adapt as needed to fit your child's developmental stage.