

Teenagers want to feel respected by their parents!

Respect is demonstrating how much you value a person by listening carefully to them and then acting on what you heard in a way that communicates your intent to understand.

Staying Connected through R.E.S.P.E.C.T

- Repetition
- Empathy
- Support
- Predictable Responses
- Engaged
- Control is Shared
- Timing Responses



Be Repetitive

- Repetitive activity shapes and changes the brain.
- Repetitive responses offer predictability.
- Predictability creates safety, decreases hyperarousal.
- Repetitive routines/interactions are hidden regulators that keep the nervous system calm.

Be Empathic

- Empathy increases trust and connection. It communicates *'I hear you.'* *'I know this is hard.'*
- Reduces hyperarousal and calms the body.
- Models effective responding to others
- Does not always require language; paired with presence and connection.
- Empathy paves the way for correction and collaboration.
- Match the intensity of your teen's experience.

Be Supportive

- View mistakes as learning experiences.
- Big changes lead to big feelings so make space.
- Recognize the 'trying on' of identities as part of development and respond with acceptance.
- Be invested in their thoughts, ideas, dreams and wishes even when they change rapidly.
- Remember development is asynchronous.



Be Present

- Being present means we resonate with what is happening in the teen's inner world.
- Look for opportunities to just be present throughout the day and show that you notice.
- Physical presence is only one way to be present, attunement to thoughts and feelings is another.
- Connection happens when you teen notices that their thoughts, feelings, worries, and wishes are important to you.

Engage through Listening

- Listen for thoughts, feelings, interests, wishes, worries, frustrations and hurts.
- Limit efforts to fix or share your own perspective.
- Limit QUESTIONS and make statements instead.
- Listening doesn't require agreement.
- Communicate you understand their perspective.
- Good listening leads to better understanding and models effective communication.
- It's difficult to gain compliance from a child who doesn't trust that you have heard and understood them.

Control is Shared

- It's easy to be triggered by a child's intense need for control of themselves and others.
- Decide what you must have control over (macro decisions) and hold firm with empathy.
- Whenever possible, offer control through choices that respect different dev. stages.
- Perceived control over self (especially the body) reduces anxiety and improves thinking.

Time Your Responses

- Brains and bodies in high arousal can't consistently make good decisions.....so wait!
- Kids generally take direction best when they are either connected. Take the time!
- Connection may need to be re-established after any big upset, disappointment or disagreement so hold your correction until after.
- Your efforts to listen, support and connect will be better received at some times than others....this is not a negative reflection on your relationship.

