

Ten Top Tips



When living with teenagers

Parents, here are ten tips on looking after yourself as you navigate the sometimes treacherous waters of living with teenagers!!

1. **Take the pressure off yourself!** Just as there are no perfect teenagers, there are no perfect parents. You will make mistakes and your teenagers can actually learn from them, if you are able to admit it and move on.
2. **Remember that conflict is normal** and is a part of your family's development. So attempt to see conflict as a means of learning and re-negotiating the relationship you have with your teenager.
3. **When the conflict escalates**, stress levels increase dramatically. So call for time out to calm down and de-stress. Go for a drive, a walk or take a shower when you feel the situation isn't going anywhere and you're feeling uptight.
4. **Make time** on a regular basis for fun and relaxation. If you don't regularly "re-charge your batteries", chances are you'll be no good to yourself or to your teenager.
5. **Be aware** of the signs and symptoms of stress for you. Listen to your body when it's telling you to take a break.
6. **If you have a partner**, make time for your relationship. It's not only your relationship with your teenager that's important. So take time out together.
7. **Talk to other parents** of teenagers when you can. It is often extremely rewarding and comforting to exchange thoughts, ideas and experiences with people in similar situations.
8. **When you feel you have run out of ideas** or that you would like some extra support, think about joining a parent support group, doing a parenting course or talking to a counsellor.
9. **If relaxation and you have a distant association** these days, explore what's on offer in your local community in relation to stress management, relaxation, meditation, yoga and exercise activities.
10. **Diet and regular exercise** form the basis of effectively managing stress in your life. Consult your family doctor to discuss making positive changes to your lifestyle and developing better self-care