



Christian Parenting for Teenagers

Session 6:

Ten Mistakes Parents Make with Their Adolescents – Part II

(Mistakes #6 - #10)



Ten Mistakes Parents Make When Raising Their Adolescents

1. Do as I say not as I do.
2. I am the adult, I am right.
3. Because I said so, that's why.
4. You want to be what?
5. This room is a pig's den.
6. Can't you do anything right?
7. Where did you find this guy?
8. How can you dare to fail?
9. Do you mind if we talk about something else?
10. I'm kind of busy right now.



6. Failure to communicate approval and acceptance

- Can't you do anything right?
- Teens want to see a "thumbs up" from the one supreme person in life, his parent.
- Teens need to be affirmed that what they are doing is pleasing to their parents. This helps them to motivate them to achieve, accomplish and to grow.
- The opposite of love is not hate, but indifference. You must feel excited in any accomplishment your teen does, no matter how small it seems to you.
- It is disheartening to hear from teens, "My dad does not have any idea about how many things I've been involved in school."
- Nothing will make a teen less important than to have his or her seemingly small interest ignored by parents.
- Relational evangelism is much more effective than preaching or condemnation.
- It is amazing to see how little affirmation wins teens over.
- You show interest in your teens, they'll begin to show interest in you.
- Criticism can be given in a loving and caring manner, PRIVATELY.
- **Four of five sentences of approval for every one sentence of disapproval.**



6. Failure to communicate approval and acceptance (continued)

- Practice the following conversation: “I know how hard you tried. Even though, you did not win, I was very proud with the way you did it.”
- Treat your teens courteously.
- Say please and thank you instead of just giving orders.
- Use the name or nickname your teen prefers.
- Treat your teen’s possessions with respect, and don’t use them without his permission.
- Compliment them when they do a task well.
- Use constructive criticism.



7. Failure to approve your teen's friends

- "Where did you find him/her?"
- Adolescents frequently know that we may disapprove their friends before we know anything about them. The parents write them off on the basis of their dress, the way they talk, or the homes they come from. Why not ask your teen what he or she likes about a certain friend.
- Teens face a lot of rejection in high school, that is why acceptance of their friends is extremely important to them.



7. Failure to approve your teen's friends (continued)

- We should think twice before we prematurely criticize our teen's friends.
- We can question how they feel about the friend in question. Quite often your teen has some of the same reservation you do.
- We should be influencing those around us. Ask the question, "How can I keep my teen from being influenced by the wrong crowd."
- "Greater is He that is in you than is in the world." (1John 4: 4) A strong loving Christian parent can positively influence teens who have not been taught respect nor right from wrong.
- Try to imitate Christ in accepting sinners but rejecting the behavior.




7. Failure to approve your teen's friends (continued)

- A committed Christian teenager will usually not have any lasting friendship with a bad crowd.
- But we need to be vigilant by watching the warning signs and setting the limits:
 - Situations involving drugs, alcohol, being in a car with someone driving under the influence, violence, and anti social behavior.
 - If this means that your teen will be lonely, create an atmosphere of friendship and fun for your teens with the help of other committed families.



8. Failure to give your teen the right to fail

- “You did what?”
- Sometimes parents think that anything less than 100% is failure. It’s a kind of perfectionism which is destructive to the teen.
- “There’s more to a doughnut than a hole.”
- Teens are still struggling and have not attained adulthood. When they fail, they need all the support.
- We should look first for their successes and encourage them before we come hard on them for their failures.
- There is nothing more touching to a teen than a parent accompanying him in difficult situations such as a traffic court or principal’s office.



8. Failure to give your teen the right to fail (continued)

- When your teenager sins, forgive him from the heart.
- When he repents, take this into consideration in your discipline.
- If there is to be a penalty (maybe the confession is penalty enough), make sure it fits the mistake. In other words, grounding the teen for the summer for failing to take out the trash would be too severe.
- After forgiveness and penalty, let your teen know that your love is unchanged.
- The hardest job of a parent is determining how to communicate best both the mercy of God and the discipline of the Spirit to the growing teenager.




9. Failure to discuss the uncomfortable

- “Do you mind if we talk about something else?”
- Some issues are simply difficult to discuss with our teens. Sex, physiological changes (such as menstrual cycle) are issues that are easier to avoid.
- If parents don’t talk about these issues, the teens will find answers on their own.
- Christian education belongs in the home.
- The church cannot be expected to fulfill parental responsibility.
- In a few hours a week, Sunday School servants cannot be expected to do what a parent is charged to do 168 hours a week.



9. Failure to discuss the uncomfortable (continued)

- A poll of 1000 teenagers revealed that sex information were gained in the following ways:
 - Only 32% of girls and 15% of boys were informed about sex by their parents.
 - 53% of boys and 42% of girls found out from friends their own age.
 - 56% of teens acquire sex knowledge between the six and ninth grades.
 - 18% if teens learned about sex before fifth grade.
 - 88% of teens felt they needed more information about sex than they had received from their parents.



9. Failure to discuss the uncomfortable (continued)

- You can use life situations to comment and ask questions about difficult matters, or the time set aside for Bible reading together to keep the channels open to talk about such matters.
- In every church, parents of teenagers should get together to discuss in a positive way what their teens are facing and what kind of support they can give to each other and to their teens.
- Be active, attend school events, get involved so you can exert an influence on your community.
- Get more educated about troublesome issues like drugs and its symptoms, teenage pregnancy, etc...



10. Failure to take time

- “I’m kind of busy right now, could you come back later?”
- Is quality time more important than quantity time?
- There is no way to have quality time without having quantity time.
- You need to spend enough time with your teens to allow those wonderful, growing, teaching moments to happen.
- You need to build friendship with your teens so they can open up with you.



10. Failure to take time (continued)

- Taking your teen on a camping or a fishing trip is a great idea. But that occasion is not about camping or fishing but rather about time spent together to build friendship.
- Take your teen along if you're going to the drugstore or hardware, ask one of your teens to go along. While driving, open up any critical subject.
- Any parent who gives his teenager his or her full attention is indeed giving more quality time than the one who is preoccupied.



10. Failure to take time (continued)

- Do not be a function-only parent.
 - “I provide housing, clothing, food, some advice, so what more is there?”
- There is much more than just providing the essentials, there is the desire to be with one another, to know one another, and to care for one another. We were created as interdependent, social creatures.
- Every parent will be called to make choices. What is more important: a promotion which means moving to another community or your teen’s senior year of high school? Working overtime or spending Saturdays with your teens?
- When you spend quantity time, God rewards you with quality time which will become the foundation of your future relationship.



Conclusion

- Parents of teenagers should always be aware of their identity as God's people in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation.
- They should instill in their teens to always listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit inside them.
- Teach them to ask themselves: "If Jesus were here, would He be pleased about my behavior?"
- Parenting is one of God's great ideas and parenting teenagers is the best part of it. Just remember, consult His Word, pray much, put your teens in God's hand, then believe God for the reward.