

Parenting Tips
Trempealeau County Promoting Safe and Stable Families
By
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When Adolescence and Mid-life Crisis Collide

Adolescence is a time of huge change. To make things even more complex, parents of the teen may begin to encounter the hormonal changes of mid-life (late 30's and 40's) just as the teen experiences the hormonal changes of puberty and sexual awakening. No wonder the teen years for both parent and child can be difficult. Both parent and child may question personal identity and fear the life changes related to career, family, and the future.

While parents feel the loss of parental control, teens feel the loss of childhood security and increasing life responsibilities. Parents ponder the "what if I had _____?" while teens fret over "what will happen if I _____?" These feelings of uncertainty, anxiety, and stress may be part of both the teen and parent's life cycle changes.

A positive parental attitude is necessary for the parent-teen relationship to grow. The following tips can help you keep a sense of perspective and humor as you encounter both your teens and your own developmental changes:

- Try to remember what it was like to be a teenager. What were your fears and problems? Take time to listen to your teen and share stories about the trials and tribulations you experienced as a teen.
- Seek information and understanding about how teens develop. Seek out other parents going through similar situations for support and ideas. Caution: Do not compare your teen to another teen. Each teen seeks his own identity and develops in his own way. Comparing your teen to one of his peers will not win any favors.
- Try new opportunities in life. You set an example of being capable of trying new things, coping with change, and solving new problems.
- Have a positive attitude about both the changes in your own life and that of your teens. Remember things don't stay the same.
- Listen to your teen. After careful listening, you will gain awareness of what to talk about. Good communication is a balance of listening for the other person's feelings and responding accordingly.
- Take care of yourself. Find interests outside of being a parent. Your teen needs to see that you take time to have fun and to pursue hobbies and other interests.

For more information about parenting workshops and resources, contact Cyndy Jacoby, Trempealeau County UW-Extension Family Living Program, PO BOX 67, Whitehall, WI 54773. Phone: 715 - 538-2311, Ext. 209 or toll free 1-877-538-2311, Ext. 209. Email: cindy.jacoby@ces.uwex.edu



Family Living Program

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