

A Brief Guide To Surviving Your Child's Adolescence

Key Struggle: Whether to be **Obedient to Authorities** or show **Independence**

This is actually a switch from depending on parents to depending on peers for approval.

Probable Needs of the Adolescent: Increased independence, shown in a desire for:

- More privacy,
- Rebellion from parental values
- Freedom to choose their friends, clothing, music, hair style
- More time with peers and less time with family
- Peer acceptance/ popularity.

Common Issues for Parents:

- Fear that the teen is not ready to be independent
- Fear of rejection by the teen
- Fear that the teen will rebel in unsafe ways- drug/alcohol use, gangs, promiscuity

Proactive suggestions:

- Discuss negative temptations and resulting consequences before the teen is faced with these decisions.
- Tolerate safe rebellion and increased privacy- Pick your battles carefully and explain the reasons for your rules.
- Slowly increase the teen's freedom to give them the opportunity to learn to make mature decisions. If your child is acting out unsafely or being irresponsible, reduce their freedom. This is to prevent them getting into situations they are not yet ready to handle maturely. If this is a serious concern, consider seeking the help of a mental health professional.
- Work more on compromises- give choices rather than making demands.
- Adolescent rebellion is not person - It is part of forming an adult identity.
- Meet your child's friends and discuss the influence they may have on your teen.
- Excessive strictness or leniency leads to the worst adolescent limit testing.
- Verbalize support when your teen is sad, hurt or disappointed, even if this seems to you to be an overreaction. Remember, feelings run very strong in teens.

If you are concerned about your teen's judgment or behavior feel free to contact Dr. Lazar at (619) 540-6038 or (858) 597-0505 or drjoel@joellazarphd.com

