

Parent Coaching

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You have worked hard to be a good parent. You have read the books, organized parent groups when your child was an infant, talked openly with other parents, and have always taken pride in being flexible and open-minded. You have heard rumors about potential difficulties in the teenage years but feel that you have laid a good foundation and that “it can’t be all that bad”.

But then you start to notice something. Your oldest, now 15, who was always eager to help out around the house, and was always so talkative about school and friends, seems to be changing. He is quieter. She is more irritable. When he talks he has learned a new language. It is called grunting. You try to engage him/her in conversation. “How was school?” “Fine”, is all the detail you are ever going to get.

Recalling some statistics that you have read and heard about adolescence make you worry. One day you find an empty beer bottle in the closet. Could my child be falling into this abyss?

You express your concerns with your parenting partner. You know your parenting styles have always been a little different but now the stakes seem higher. Should the parenting “team” be more strict? How do you get your child to talk? It is not clear what to do or say. You are tired of arguing with your child. Now you seem to be arguing with your partner/spouse more than ever.

Parenting is hard enough. When your oldest hits the teenage years, it can really be a shock. Adolescence signals a significant developmental step in the family. A child is making the first moves toward independence. The rules seem to be changing and a comfortable role that you had for 15 years is suddenly being challenged.

It is a dangerous time. Teenagers are prone to mood swings, and vulnerable to depression. Experimentation with alcohol and drugs is common within the teen culture. There is much pressure to explore sexuality. They are “coming of age” and will soon have the legal right to get behind the wheel of a car!

There is help and support for you. This is where **Parent Coaching** comes in. When home life seems just too difficult and there is too much worry, too much fighting, and too much uncertainty, perhaps it is time to pick up the phone and make an appointment with a Parent Coach. Coaching promises to quickly assess your own particular individual and family issues and plan interventions that are most effective. Coaching is unique and differentiated from traditional therapy. It is an instructional program where educational material, including articles and handouts, enhance the use of new strategies and techniques.

The most important services coaching provides:

- *To help a parent clearly differentiate between what is normal and what should be of serious concern.
- *To help parents maintain a reasoned perspective, and to help partners work effectively together.
- *To help you better communicate with your teenager, and
- *To promote a better and deeper relationship with your teenager.