

7 Tricks to Surviving the Teen Years

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Introduction

- i. There are no real tricks to surviving the teen years, yet there are Biblical principles that will provide guidance.
 - a. God's Word provides all we need for training and teaching (2 Tim. 3:16).
 - b. It also provides us with all we need to survive the teen years.
- ii. There is no standard set of rules that apply for every family or every teen.
 - a. Every family is different.
 - b. Every teen is unique.
- iii. There are basic principles that will help both the parent and teen survive the growth process.

1. Don't Sweat the Small Stuff!

- a. Parents can become so focused on making beds and cleaning rooms that they fail to see the big picture.
- b. The disciples often struggled with this as they followed after Jesus (John 4:27-32).
- c. Determine to train your teen in the service of God (Prov. 22:6).
 - (1) Does this issue influence or affect my ultimate goal?
 - (2) How will my actions or lack of action affect my teen?

2. Respect the Things They Care About!

- a. Teens often care about things that make no sense to parents.
- b. Some of the greatest parenting moments come when we meet teens on their turf.
 - (1) That is how Jesus ministered.
 - (2) Jesus went to the well (John 4:1-26).
 - (3) How important was it to Zacchaeus that Jesus went to his house (Luke 19:1-10)?
- c. While there are times when parents must speak out and take a stand, it can be done in a way that does not belittle (1 John 3:18).

3. Use Discipline Wisely and Appropriately!

- a. Parents bear a great responsibility to teach and train their children (Eph. 6:1-4).
 - (1) Training involves discipline.
 - (2) Admonition refers to verbal instruction.
 - (3) Paul begins his admonition to fathers by telling them not to provoke their children.
- b. Methods of discipline must change as our children grow.
 - (1) Discipline methods that may have been effective and appropriate in their early years, may provoke them as teens.
 - (2) Love must always be the center focus of discipline, regardless of age (1 John 3:1-2).

4. Adjust Your Dreams As Needed!

- a. Every parent establishes expectations for their children.
 - (1) Sometimes they exceed those expectations.
 - (2) Sometimes they don't come close to them.
- b. What matters the most?
 - (1) It's not wealth, prestige or education (Matt. 19:16-24).
 - (2) What matters most is that they do the will of the Father (Matt. 7:21).
- c. The pressure to achieve earthly expectations must never over shadow the eternal expectation.

5. Make Spiritually Focused Memories!

- a. Time is precious and should be met with purpose (Ecc. 3:1-11).
- b. What memories do you want your teen to look back on?
 - (1) Memories are part of the foundation we set.
 - (2) Paul urged the church at Corinth to imitate his service in Christ (1 Cor. 4:15-17).
 - (3) That was possible because of their memories of Paul.

6. Teach Proper Priorities!

- a. Teens learn how to prioritize from those around them.
- b. Following Christ is to be the single priority of our lives (Matt. 16:24).

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c. Parents cannot control every aspect of a teen's life, but they can control the priorities of the family unit.

7. Lead By Example!

a. The success of the six previous points is dependent upon this.

b. Be the example that your teen can follow (Heb. 13:7; 3 John 11).