



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Top tips

for parents of teenagers



**Magu plant.
Rhowch amser iddo.**

**Parenting.
Give it time.**

This advice promotes positive parenting - a parenting style that focuses on what your child is doing right and their strengths. All children need boundaries and discipline. Positive parenting is based on creating this with warmth and respect between parent and child.

1. Pick your battles

Prioritise and focus on the most important issues at any one time. Behaviours that are unsafe for your teenager or others should always be the priority.



3. Positive praise

Teenagers may act very grown up one moment and very immature the next. They will make lots and lots of mistakes as they learn and practise skills. So praise what is going well and when it isn't, forgive their mistakes and move on.

2. Think long-term

You are raising a child to become an adult. Think about the skills they need to become independent and reach their potential, such as:

- **Being accountable for their actions**
- **Being able to control themselves (self-regulation)**
- **Being able to bounce back (resilience)**
- **Able to listen and speak up (communicate)**
- **Understand and respect others (empathy)**

These skills are just as important as practical skills, such as organisation and self-care.

4. Problem solve together

If your teenager shares their problems with you, don't rush in to solve them but work together by asking them what they feel is the best solution. If you plan to intervene, ask permission and don't break their trust unless someone's safety is at risk.



5. Keep communicating

Find opportunities to listen. Use “I” when addressing any issues, for example “I get very worried when you don't check in at the time we agreed” or “I find it very irritating when you keep all the cups in your bedroom.” This is less confrontational than saying “you” have done something wrong.

Be respectful of their opinions even if you don't agree.

6. Be clear about rules

Make it clear when rules are non-negotiable. This may be something such as “you may not drink alcohol until you reach the legal age.” It's useful to also communicate the underlying message explaining why - in this case “your welfare and safety is important.”



7. You are the role model

Parents are the most influential people in a teenager's life, so don't just tell them things, lead by example.

8. Work together

Each of you will need to negotiate and compromise. Using commands, for example, "Do this" or "Don't do that", has two responses: obedience or defiance. Either of these can create resentment, lack of respect, and distance in relationships.

9. Practise self-control

By controlling our own impulsive reactions, we develop better judgement and patience that gives us stability, influence and status as a parent.

10. Keep connected

Parents often feel marginalised in their child's life as their teenager becomes more independent. Keep connected to them by taking an interest in their lives, and keep communication lines open. Share experiences, and reminisce about past events to help maintain your teenager's sense of belonging.

Do not smack or physically punish your child. This is illegal in Wales.

Always look after your own physical and mental wellbeing as you will not be able to support your teenager's needs if you are not taking care of your own.

If you found this helpful, we have more top tips and information available [here](#).