

# Spending Time with Your Teen

## Its tough to find time, but its important.

### Why?

In 57% of American families, both parents work full-time.

From 1973 to 1992 the average work-week has increased from 41-47 hours.

Source: The Pro-Teen Parent by Daniel Hahn  
Questar Publishing, 1992

Young adults who dont get at least one hour of adult time each day are at greater risk for substance abuse, regardless of all other factors.

Developmentally teens need positive attention to mature into healthy adults. All teens needs an adult to spend time with them listening to their ideas and the new struggles they are facing as they enter each new stage into adulthood.

For an adult to get to know a teen and understand the changes they are going through as they grow-up, the adult must spend time with the teen.

Teens have a lot of positive assets that are available to the family if they are given adult time and support.

### How

There are key attitudes an adult must have to effectively spend time with a teen.

Open-Mindedness: Adults with this attitude are unprejudiced in their thinking. Being unprejudiced when listening to the teen, the adult will be able to allow the teen to express themselves more freely.

Wise: Adults with this attitude are able to anticipate risks or maximum opportunity for the teens own learning and development.

Asset-Oriented: Adults with this attitude take the chance to look beyond what they might disagree with and see the good in the teen. By taking this chance they are chancing falling more and more in love with the teen.

Risk-Taking: Adults with this attitude are willing to try new ideas and experiences which are new and different (not necessarily dangerous) for the adult or the teen.

Consistency: Adults with this attitude make sure they regularly set an appointment to spend one-on-one quality time.

Attentiveness: Adults with this attitude focus their attention completely on the child. For example, while the teen is talking, these adults dont think about something else and they dont try to interupt and interject their own statement.

Self-Disclosing: Adults with this attitude share the ways in which they enjoying spending free time and their areas of expertise. They also allow the teen to share favorite activities with them.

### What

So what should teens and adults do together to experience optimal together time? The answer is easy, ANYTHIING!!!! This is a time to do anything either of the teen or adult enjoys. The only catch to this is; sometimes one is going to like something the other hates. With key attitudes in hand this shouldnt be a problem. Adults can take this chance to show teens that it is okay to do something you dont like, or arent good at. And that the teen is important enough to spend time doing things the adults hate. It is still important for the adult to share themselves and their interests!!!! So, do anything you want,

### **Some Ideas**

Support Activities

Listening

Attending extracurricular activities (games, concerts, etc.)

Hosting Parties

Getting to Know Friends

### **Shared Activities**

Help with homework

Playing Sports

Fishing, camping

Discussing TV or books

### **What you can do:**

Make your own list of activities

Use either suport or interaction activites

### **Take the time to:**

encourage

develop talents

notice problems and needs

show respect and care

### **What do Teens Think**

#### **Positive Ways in Which your Parents Spend Time**

"Talking" - 14

"Working on house, going to Sutherlands (hardware store), going to basketball games" - 13

"We go to Perkins for a pie! We go on walks. We horseback rides. We talk." - 12

"Watch movies, ride bikes, talk" - 13

"talking, walk, go out to lunch" - 16

"I talk and have discussions with my parents." -16

"golf, sail, car-work" -13

"lunch, movie, out-of-town trips" --16

"shopping, trips, cooking" - 16

"me and my mother spend time together by reading in the scripture" -13

"they do things with us and our friends, we go on trips together and help with activities were involved in" - 16

"We go on camping trips. My mom and I talk a lot about everyday things. We go bowling, watch movies, etc." - 13

"every week we go out to breakfast and do devotions, we play games together!"14

"reading, at dinner, after every one is in bed." -12

"We went to Armagedon, we talk about anything." -- 12

"My mom shops with me, my uncle helps me with homework." - 13

"My mom and I spend time talking about life and the Bible and laugh together." - 13

"Go to dinner, go to family movies" - 13

"talking about day, camping, family vacations" - 14

"help with activities I am involved with, go for drives, go shopping." - 15

"watch TV" - 15

Developed By: Cristine Braddy and Ben Silliman

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Glen Whipple, Director, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Wyoming. Laramie, WY 82071. Persons seeking admission, employment, or access to programs of the University of Wyoming shall be considered without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political belief, disability, veteran status, and marital or family status. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication or program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact their local UW Extension Office. To file a complaint, write the UW Employment Practices/ Affirmative Action office. University of Wyoming, PO Box 3354, Laramie, WY 82071-3354.