

How to Show Your Youth You Care!!!

This handout is to help remind you of the ways you've shown love and appreciation to your youth and to offer suggestions how to further build that important relationship. Your youth may be experiencing challenges associated with being a teenager and will likely be looking to you for both encouragement and guidance. It can be confusing or overwhelming for parents to define how "to best" facilitate their youth's growth while building a strong relationship. This is a guide filled with some tangible tips on how to improve or maintain the connection with your youth, but also offers room to come up with your own ideas.

Compliment Your Youth

Compliment your youth's unique personality, character, talents and passions. Hearing and feeling your recognition of their individual character helps your youth to feel special, important and confident about themselves. With their increased feelings of worth, they will be able to better stand up to peer pressure, develop individual talents and become a positive decision maker.

When giving compliments, be honest and genuine, and keep the comment positive. The compliment needs to stand alone without conditions such as "but," "only when," "why don't you" or "if." You may want to not only identify big accomplishments but also the day-to-day successes they experience.

Consider These...

- Give a "high five" or a "fist pound" as a gesture of congratulations.
- Post something they have earned, achieved or created, such as artwork, poetry, or awards.
- Take and display photographs of your child participating in something they enjoy or are good at, such as skateboarding, playing the guitar, dancing, or karate.
- Think of a positive quality *specific to just your child* that you appreciate such as their sense of humor, intelligence, speed, story-telling, or independence and sincerely express it to them.
- Acknowledge when they have a good idea and follow-through with their problem-solving.



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