

# Research highlights five key tasks of parenting teenagers

There's no question--being the parent of a teen can be hard work! But according to researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health, there are five key tasks for parents:

1. Love and connect. Teens feel like everything in their world is changing, from their bodies to their friends to their school. Your love and support should provide your teen with a firm foundation.
2. Monitor and observe. Stay tuned in to what your teen is doing, and with whom. Just as important, be sure she knows you're tuned in!
3. Guide and limit. If there is a single message for parents, it might be this: Loosen up, but don't let go. Teens still need limits, and you're the one to provide them.
4. Model and consult. Your example is even more important now. Show your teen what a loving parent, a responsible citizen or a good neighbor do. And answer her questions in ways that are truthful, but still recognize her level of maturity.
5. Provide and advocate. Teens need a network of supporting adults. So work with other parents to provide the opportunities teens need to thrive. If your teen needs preventive care or treatment--for medical or mental health issues--be a strong advocate.

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