

Creating Healthy Boundaries with Teens

Cypress Ranch High School

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PRESENTERS: From CommunityCounseling.com

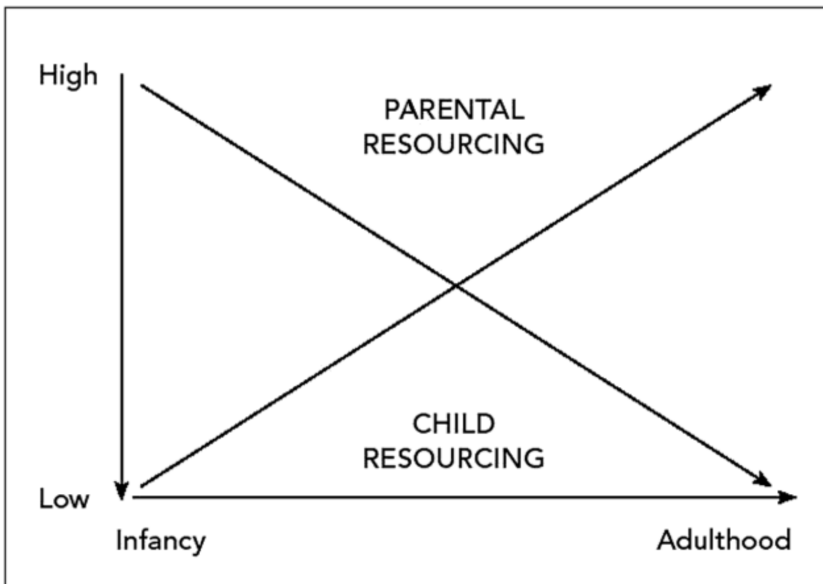
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KEY RESOURCE

- Boundaries with Teens by Dr. John Townsend.

THE PROBLEMS WITH BOUNDARIES AND TEENS

THE GOAL OF PARENTING: Raising Adults



WHAT ARE BOUNDARIES

Boundaries are how you define yourself, say who you are and who you are not, set limits, and establish consequences.

WHY PARENTS STRUGGLE WITH BOUNDARIES AND TEENS

We Remember Too Much

- Parents who grew up in an overly strict family of origin may set fewer boundaries for their teens.

We Remember Too Little

- Parents who grew up in homes where the parents never listened may have difficulty in listening to their teens.

We Feel Guilty or Afraid

- Parents may feel guilty that we work too much or for going through a divorce and leaving them with only one parent in their life.
- Parents may feel afraid if they set limits their teen may distance, detach themselves, and withdraw their love.

DEVELOPING THE FOUR KEY CAPACITIES AS PARENTS

- **Definition:** Know who you are, what you want, and what you value.
- **Separateness:** Separate your sense of self, and experience your feelings and perceptions as different from your teens'.
- **Honesty:** Being open about what you expect as a parent, and includes owning your mistakes when they happen.
- **Persistence:** Stick with the rules and the consequences, as long as they are reasonable.

FOUR ANCHORS OF CREATING HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

Anchor #1: Love: "I am on your side."

- Always begin with love because boundaries feel harsh and uncaring.
- Connect before you correct.
- "I am not doing this because I am mad, or want to punish you, or don't care about you. I am doing this because I want your best."
- Love helps the teen see that her behavior is the problem, not an out-of-control and angry parent.

Anchor #2: Truth: “I Have Some Rules and Requirements”

- Your teen needs to know where the line is
- When you bring them into the relationship, you are helping your child see that structure and responsibility are normal and expected in life.
- SMART goals in business: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-based.
- Don't get mad. Get clear!

Anchor #3: Freedom: “You Can Choose to Respect or Reject the Rules.”

- Freedom is necessary.
- You can't really MAKE your teen choose the right thing.
- Freedom to choose poorly is necessary to learn to choose well.
- Unless it's dangerous, give teens freedom to follow house rules or not. But the teens' choice may result in parents limiting their freedom.

Anchor #4: Reality: “Here is What Will Happen”

- Teens need consequences, because that is how they experience a fundamental law of life: good behavior brings good results, and bad behavior leads to uncomfortable results.
- Consequence: Either removing the desirable or adding the undesirable to your teens life as a result of a rules violation.
- Whenever possible allow your teen to experience the natural consequences to an undesirable behavior or attitude.
- Consequences should be SAID and DONE.

CATEGORIES OF CONSEQUENCES

Social Access

- Ground your teen.
- Restrict phone privileges.
- Uninstall instant messaging.
- Restrict driving privileges.

Media

- Restrict access to television.
- Restrict access to computer/phone for connecting, browsing, music.
- Remove access to video games.

Tasks

- Assign added chores.
- Assign extra homework.
- Assign community service.

CONCLUSION: IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

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Books

- Boundaries with Teens: When to Say Yes, How to Say No by Dr. John Townsend
- Boundaries with Kids: How Healthy Choices Grow Healthy Children by Dr. Henry Cloud & Dr. John Townsend
- Boundaries in Marriage: Understanding the Choices that Make or Break Loving Relationships by Dr. Henry Cloud & Dr. John Townsend
- Parenting Teens With Love And Logic: Preparing Adolescents for Responsible Adulthood by Foster Cline & Jim Fay

Podcasts

- Growing Connected - Dr. Jeffrey and Amy Olrick
 - Resisting the Control Trap - A Better Way to Boundaries with Teens
- Life Skills 4 Kids - Deb Hopper, Occupational Therapist
 - Contracting Boundaries and Consequences for Teenagers
- Mighty Parenting: Raising Teens & Parenting Young Adults
 - Boundaries for Teens
- Raise a Little Hell Podcast - Jax Anderson and Renee Swason
 - Coping with the Backlash of Setting Boundaries

Websites

- Boundaries.me/blog - Dr. Henry Cloud (Search for articles about teens)
- Empoweringparents.com - Tools to manage the most difficult problems: disrespect, defiance, backtalk, lying, laziness, motivation, and much more.
- GetParentingTips.com - Free resource for parents provided by the Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) division of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.
- Parentandteen.com - The Center for Parent and Teen Communication