

Tip of the Week: Family Communication  
June 25, 2008

Good communication is very important for the families' well-being. There is an excellent series available in our office called Teen Talk, a "Survival Guide for Parents of Teenagers". Some of these points are applicable in other relationships even if you are not a parent.

**Have you ever wondered if your child cares about what you think?**

Your child probably cares a great deal about what you think. Talking encourages family togetherness and increases the likelihood teens will share parents' values.

**What kinds of things do teens want to talk about?**

**Family issues**

**Controversial issues**

**Emotional concerns**

**The big whys**

**The future**

**Current events**

**Personal interests**

**Parent's lives**

**How to talk with your teen:**

- Don't lecture, talk for hours, or ambush your teen.
- **Listen** carefully to their concerns and feeling, and respect their views.
- Stress that your teenager can and should make choices about his or her behaviors, and is responsible for these decisions.
- Offer praise. Make a date to spend one on one time with your teen. Find something you both like to do.
- **Tell your teen you love them.** With all the changes they are going through, they need to hear it now more than ever.
- Choose your battles. Focus your energy on the important issues.
- **Resolve conflict.** Establish ground rules, treat each other with respect, listen to each other, and reach a mutual understanding. Use "I statements".