

Giving Good Feedback to a Teenager

Description

Why give feedback?

- Feedback refers to a comment on an act or behaviour that either **seeks to change or reinforce** that act or behaviour. That is, feedback is always intentional.
- It's easy to give nice feedback, but it's really important to learn to speak up if things aren't going well.
- Feedback should be seen as **an opportunity to develop another or build another's self-esteem**. Feedback should be a source of continuous improvement.
- **A lack of feedback causes hesitation in people**. In this state questions arise as to whether or not anyone is interested in what or how they are doing. When there is no feedback on the work being done, it's easier to feel anxious and insecure.
- Youth who have thoughts about themselves, their skills and their development and don't receive emotional support are often found at lower levels of achievement than those who are given feedback and encouraged.

How to give good feedback?

- **Timing is important** in providing feedback. It is not advisable to wait for the perfect moment to give feedback, give it immediately so it feels relevant and focused.
- Feedback can also be expressed as **micro feedback, body language, expressions, gestures or a few words** and can provide the teenager with a feeling of success.
- It is important to **give more positive than negative feedback**. Even if there's a balance between positive and negative feedback, one usually hears, remembers and is more sensitive to negative feedback.
- **Giving negative feedback requires emotional intelligence and skills**. The person giving the feedback must be able to control not only their own feelings, but also be able to feel empathy and again, timing. In this case be aware of who is around and how their presence will impact them and the one receiving the negative feedback.
- Sometimes corrective social feedback is also needed. Learn to tell teenagers how he or she could behave differently. Give constructive feedback on what to do and not to do, never about the person.

Tips to remember when giving feedback

- The purpose of feedback is always to help the recipient move forward.
- Be genuine and sincere.
- Don't give feedback when you are irritated or tired.
- You can never give too much positive feedback!

- Give critical feedback between positive feedback. Even then, don't use sarcasm or use embarrassment to bring the lesson home.
 - Speak clearly and concretely even when giving corrective feedback.
 - Remember the message of constructive feedback: Tell us what *you* see, notice, hear. Tell them how it affects *you*. Share *your* feelings. Encourage teenagers to take a new approach.
 - Be prepared to discuss, refine, and answer questions. Feedback is a two-way street where the parties meet.
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