Developmental Stages: 13-18 Years Old

Presented by Military & Family Life Counselors
Objectives

Participants will learn:
» How developmental issues can affect behaviors
» Tips for parenting
» Methods for disciplining teens
Agenda

» Introduction
» Characteristics of Teens
» Adolescent Development
» Parenting Tips
» Discipline Guidelines
» Summary
Introduction

» The teen years are a challenging time for both parents and teens

» Suddenly the child who used to talk to you and come to you for advice may have withdrawn

» Your child who was compliant may now be more oppositional

» Understanding the development of your teen can help you understand their behavior and how to parent them
Characteristics of Teens

» Wants to spend less time with you and more time with peers
» Is usually self conscious and concerned with appearance
» Wants to fit in with peers
» May become more oppositional
Adolescent Development
Physical Development

» Ages 13-14
  – Gain in height and weight
  – Girls: breast and hip development
  – Boys: deepening of voice

» Ages 15-18
  – Puberty is completed
  – Girls: physical growth slows down
  – Boys: physical growth continues
Cognitive Development

» Ages 13-14
  - Increased capacity for abstract thought
  - Intellectual interests expand and become more important
  - Deeper moral thinking

Ages 15-18
  - Further capacity for abstract thought
  - Thinking about the meaning of life
  - Increased ability for setting goals
» Ages 13-14

- Worries about fitting in with peer group
- Concerned about their appearance
- Increased influence of peer group
- Wants more privacy
- Moodiness
- Wants independence
- May regress to childish behavior when stressed
Ages 15-18

- Still adjusting to changing body
- Continues to distance self from parents - gravitating more towards peer group
- May complain that parents interfere with independence
- Becoming more self-involved
- Continued adjustment to changing body
- Increased interest in opposite sex – desires feelings of love and passion
Tips for Parenting Teens
Parenting Tips

- Be a role model
- Set rules and consequences and be consistent
- Choose your battles
- Give them their privacy
- Get to know their friends
- Have them check in with you and let you know where they are
- Keep communication channels open
- Discuss rather than lecture
» Discuss consequences of risky behaviors
» Help them figure out how to handle a potentially dangerous situation and have a game plan
» Show interest in their activities
» Let them know you love and care about them
» Catch them being good – don’t just focus on the negative
» Have weekly family meetings
» Be aware of changes in their behavior – it could be a sign they are in trouble
» Give them unconditional acceptance
» Don’t set them up to fail – set reasonable goals
Discipline Guidelines
Establishing Rules & Limits

Rules and limits provide your teen with a sense of stability:

- Establish age appropriate rules and limits
- Have your teen participate in setting rules and consequences
- Be consistent
Setting Consequences

» Set consequences that can be completed quickly, then give the teen a chance to try again
» Establish trust
» Use natural and logical consequences
Natural Consequences

» A natural result of the behavior
» Not imposed by the parent
» Allows the teen to own the problem and face the consequences
» Teaches self-discipline
Logical Consequences

» Imposed on the teen by the parent as a result of the teen’s behavior

» Should be logically related to the behavior

» Makes the teen accountable for their choices and behaviors

» Allows their problems to belong to them – not to you
The teen years can be challenging for both teens and parents.

It’s important to understand adolescent development in order to understand your teen’s behaviors and needs.

Providing a good role model for teens is essential.

Discipline should include both natural and logical consequences.

It’s important to catch your teen being good and not just focus on the negative.
Resources

» Military Family Support Services
» Chaplain and Local Clergy
» Military OneSource (800) 342-9647
» TRICARE www.tricare.osd.mil
» Behavioral Health Services
References

- 10 Parenting Tips You Should Know, by Jeanie Lerche Davis