

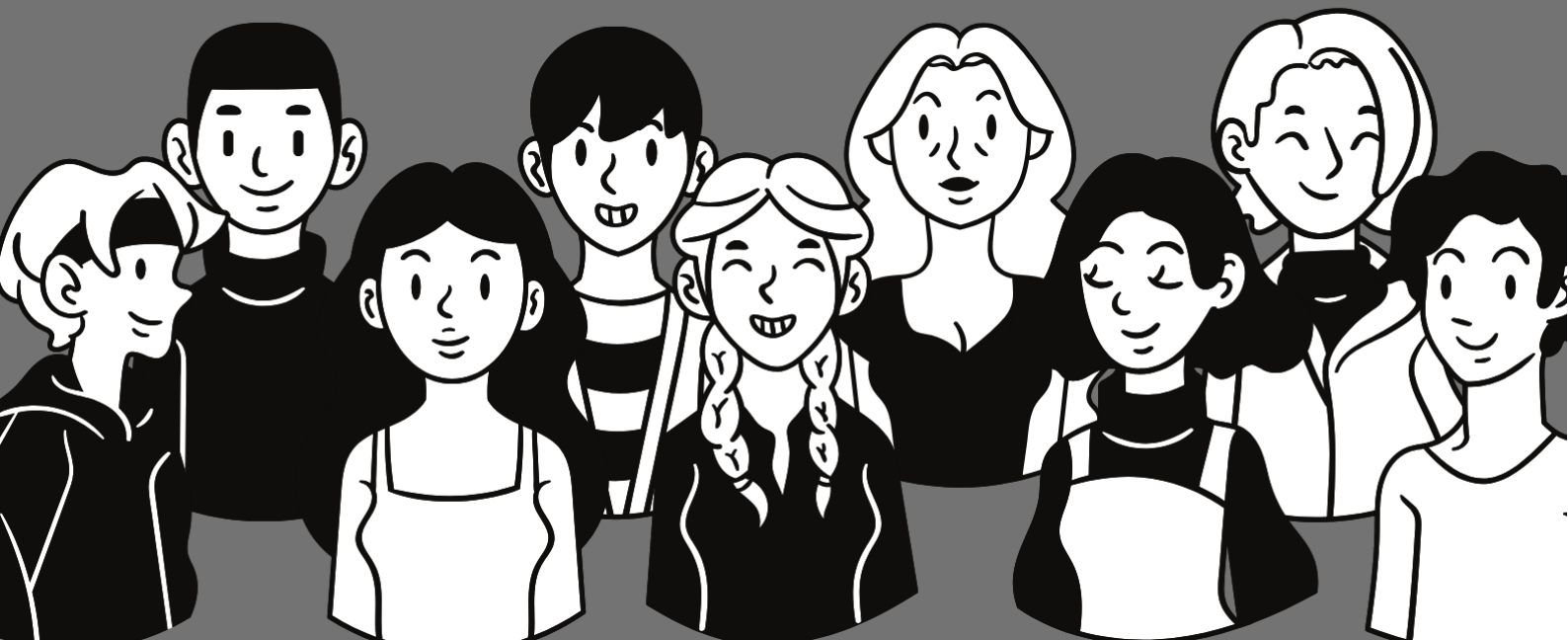


PENNTHORPE

PENNTHORPE
WELLBEING
WEEK 2020

PARENTING THE MODERN TEEN

*Navigating the teenage
years*



What we know....

You might recognise some of the classic teenage symptoms:

- ✓ think nothing we do seems right
- ✓ think we are losers
- ✓ think whatever we say is wrong and however we say it is wrong too
- ✓ think we know nothing
- ✓ know everything
- ✓ appear inherently rude and disrespectful
- ✓ take part in riskier activities
- ✓ are less rational and logical
- ✓ are more impulsive
- ✓ are prone to take things the wrong way
- ✓ overreact to things that are seemingly benign
- ✓ complain of being bored and may seem unmotivated.



The BIG issue:

Smartphones and social media

There is no escaping it!

Even school work depends on it! Nothing is private today, everyone knows everything about everyone, and of course, only the perfect photographs of their perfect lives are shared with the world. The pressures on them through smartphones and social media are immense.

Teens might think that they 'converse' and 'connect' via SnapChat and through interactional games like Minecraft and FortNight, but it's not a real conversation. Teens are losing the real-time experience of being able to see someone's eyes and read body language.



PENNTHORPE

PENNTHORPE
WELLBEING
WEEK 2020

Communication is key!

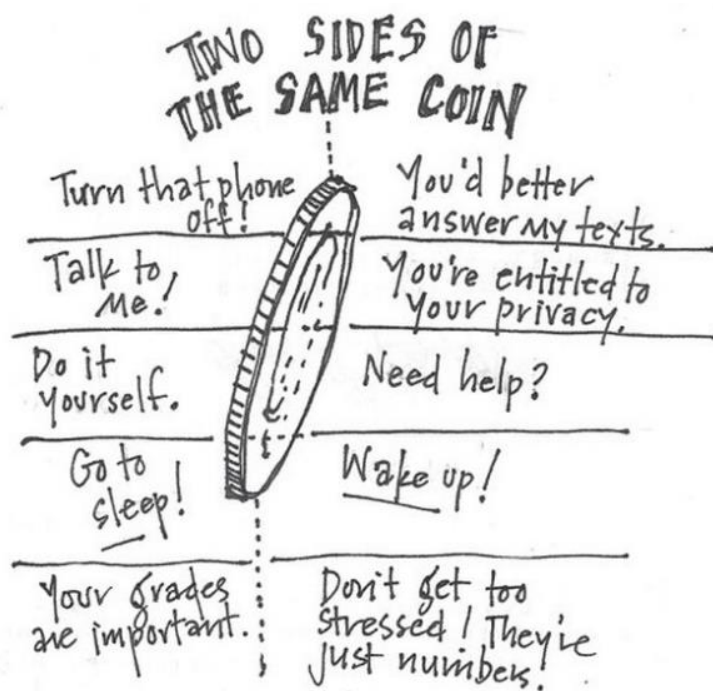
- ✓ As parents, we need to be aware of the fact that turning to electronics allows our teens to escape dealing with uncomfortable emotions. If they feel bored – they go online. If they are sad – they go online. If they are lonely – they go online. Teenagers immerse themselves in games, YouTube videos and chatting on SM because the virtual world has almost become more exciting to them than the real world.
- ✓ Managing technology and device use in our homes is a must-do by parents.
- ✓ Find a way to communicate the boundaries and share with them concerns in a way that they respond with less resistance.
- ✓ Let them share how they feel about it.



Understanding your own 'triggers' will help you communicate.

When you have unmet expectations, have you ever been pushed to shout "That's it! I'm done. I'm so done with ALL of you!"

- ✓ Unmet expectations by teens cause you to suffer, and zap you of joy!
- ✓ Reflection is needed to understand that these expectations belong to us and sometimes may be unrealistic. This can cause conflict and a breakdown in communication with your child. Creating mutual expectation is the key.
- ✓ Experts say that the interactions between parents and their children are more often about the way in which the parent responds than about the teen's behaviour.



An example...

Frustration and conflict caused by NOT doing or not getting down to doing Prep that is due the next day.

What in me is being triggered to cause me to be frustrated?

- ✓ I am an organised person. I am time efficient and I get triggered when my kids are inefficient with their time
- ✓ I also find it super hard when they don't listen to me and take my advice when I know that it is sound, logical, practical
- ✓ I hate it when things are left to the last minute. It stresses me out because I am not a last-minute person!

The options:

- a. A lecture about how they always leave things to the last minute and waste so much time. This being caused by the reality that your child is different to you and may go about things differently. These differences can be challenging for you.

OR

- b. The reality is that they will have their own way of doing their Prep. We have to accept that this is okay. It is okay that it may not be our way or the expectation we have of ourselves.

The outcome:

They will get their Prep done. Yes, it may be rushed and yes, the time to do it may run out.

But, you will have stayed out of it and your child will feel empowered to undertake their task themselves. You not commenting on how they choose to complete their Prep, but being there to support if required, will mean that there is no conflict between you.



PENNTHORPE

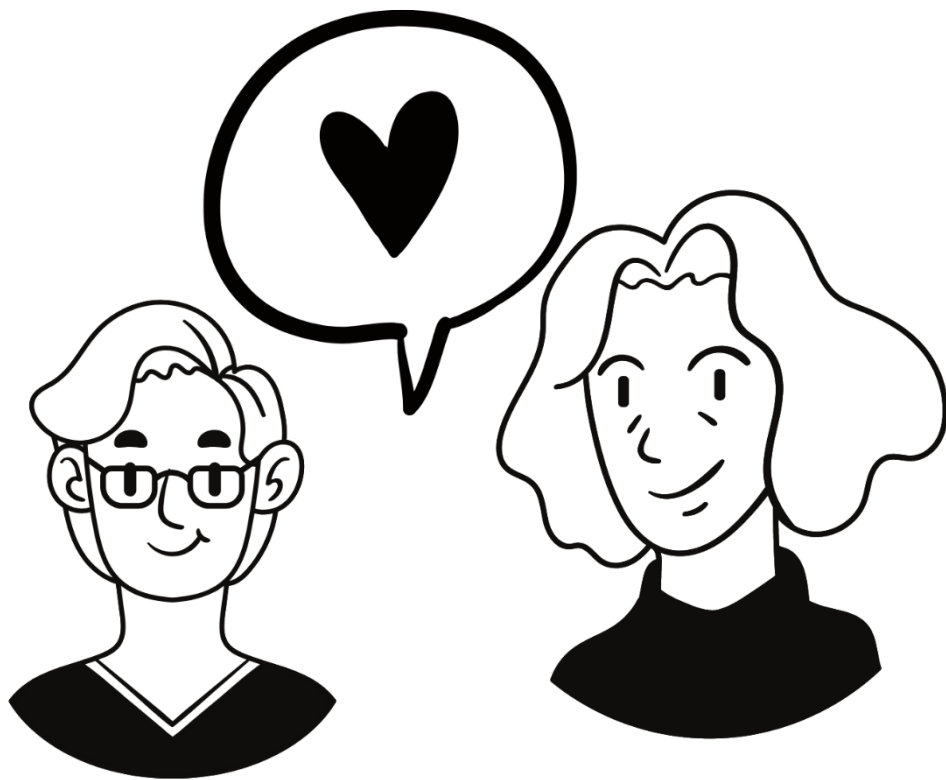
PENNTHORPE
WELLBEING
WEEK 2020

Put your relationship first...

Whatever you do, always try to put the relationship first. This does not mean giving in to your teenagers either. It simply means to go about things in a way that will preserve the relationship and not damage it.

Think also about the location and timing of your communication.

Successful communication happens when your teenager is spoken to in a location and at a time where they feel relaxed and safe.



PENNTHORPE

PENNTHORPE
WELLBEING
WEEK 2020

Use empathy...

Put yourself in your teenager's shoes.

Just imagine how you would feel if your boss stormed into your office, pointed his finger at you and berated you for a mistake you made. Then, he started ranting about all the things you said you would do but hadn't, followed by some snippety comment about the mess in your office and the look and style of your clothes!

- ✓ Respect is a two-way street. As the parent, we should be the first to role model this concept, as hard as this can be. If we become disrespectful in our approach towards our teenagers, we cannot expect respect in return.
- ✓ What if we were to try and talk to our teenagers with the same respect we give when we talk with our friends or work colleagues?
- ✓ What if we were prepared to step out of the "control seat" and into the "support seat" with them?
- ✓ What if we were to try and give them guidance rather than dictate and tell them what to do?
- ✓ It is not so much **WHAT** we say to our teenagers but **HOW** we say it to them that holds the key.

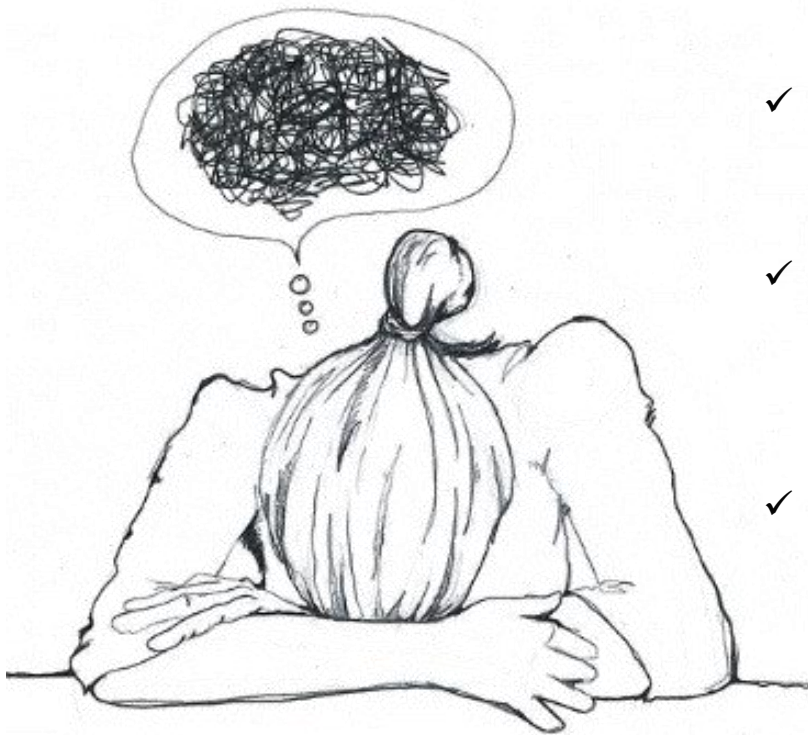


Teen pressures

Did you know that one of a teen's biggest concerns today is the pressure to succeed and wanting to know what their path will be?

“The parental push to raise an uber-successful child has never been more keenly felt, so much so that researchers have a name for it: “Child contingent self-esteem”, or the tendency for a parent to base their own self-worth on the success of their child.”

Rachel Simmons, author of *Enough As She Is*.



- ✓ Children's behaviour can be looked at as just simply behaviour.
- ✓ We may not think much about it other than the times when it was frustrating and socially unacceptable.
- ✓ However, behaviour is a way of communicating needs and worries, or that support is required (they just don't know quite how to communicate this)
- ✓ Many teenagers' behaviours tell us that there is just too much pressure on them. There is pressure on them to look good, be on the party list, have the latest and greatest clothing, have lots of 'LIKES', be in the popular group, get good grades, succeed, be happy and complete many extra-curricular activities.



What do out teenagers need from us?

Teenagers often don't know what they need and find it hard to communicate that they need anything at all.

They need us to:

- ✓ Be active listeners (hear the unsaid things)
- ✓ Be their supporter
- ✓ Set mutual expectations that are not born out of our own fears and stick to them
- ✓ Trust that our teenager knows what is expected of them and support not nag
- ✓ Give them the responsibility they need
- ✓ Always have their back and be on their side (you can discuss choices made later)
- ✓ Instill in them a belief and trust in themselves
- ✓ Remind rather than nag
- ✓ Let go of control
- ✓ Not be a helicopter over them, micro-managing their every move
- ✓ Let them find their own solutions to the challenges they face
- ✓ Not over-protect them or indulge in them – love them
- ✓ Minimise the number of questions you ask them, especially when it is concerned with finding out something that I know they would rather not tell me and is only theirs to know!
- ✓ Be able to control ourselves in the face of whatever teenage behaviour they throw our way
- ✓ See and accept them for who it is they are and not the teen of our dreams or the teen we were
- ✓ Respond to them with curiosity, compassion, empathy, and kindness for as much of the time as is humanly possible
- ✓ Be curious as to what might be going on for them beneath the surface
- ✓ Respect their privacy and need to have their own space
- ✓ Help them to recognise the signs of too much time spent in the virtual world and set boundaries around it for themselves
- ✓ Find ways to mitigate some of the pressure they might be under and not add to it
- ✓ Look ahead at the diary and plan in time for them to sleep and rest – they are unlikely to do this themselves.

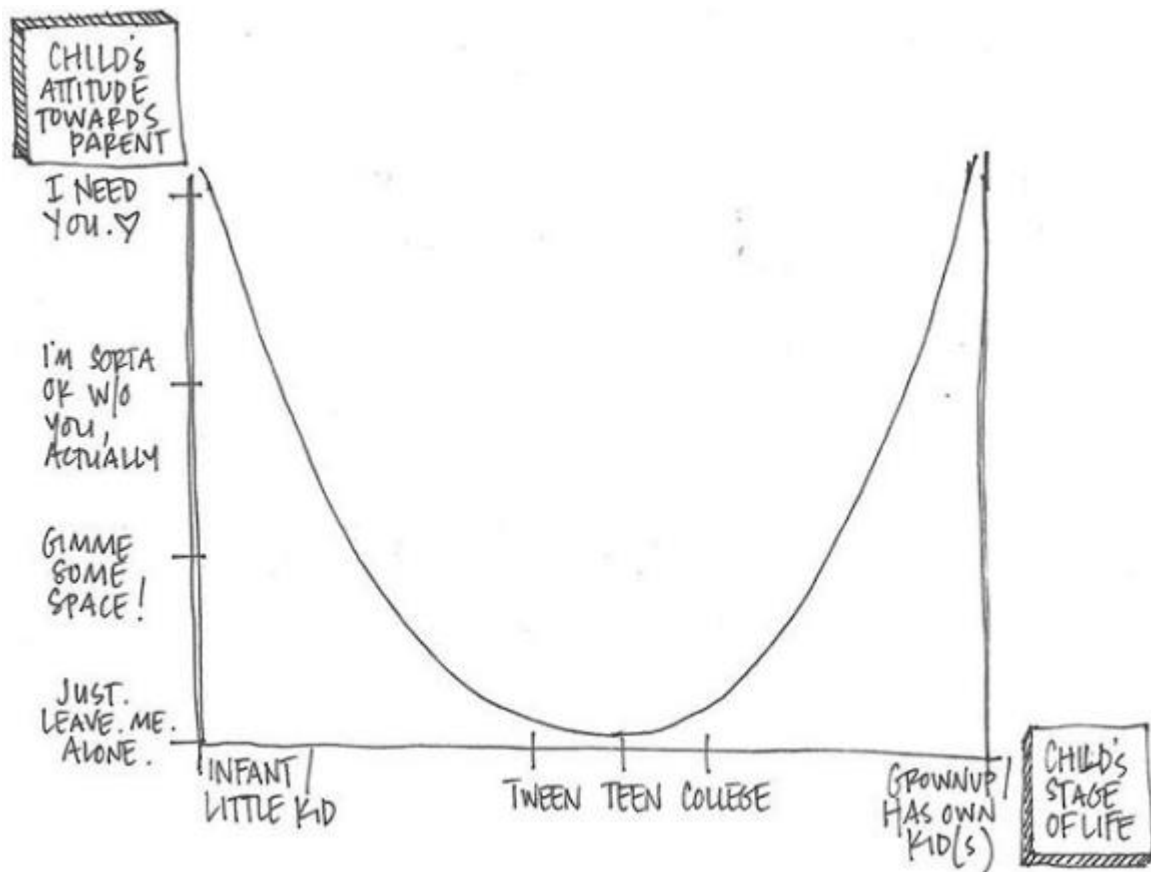


PENNTHORPE

PENNTHORPE
WELLBEING
WEEK 2020

Good luck!

Remember the teenage years are a path we all tread, a time when mistakes will be made, successes will be had, disappointment may happen and a time where each teenager is seeking out who they wish to be. It will go quickly so try and enjoy and embrace the ride!



PENNTHORPE

PENNTHORPE
WELLBEING
WEEK 2020