



Families First – Parenting Classes Curriculum

Young Kids

- **Communicate so they will hear.**
 - Have you ever wondered why you talk and your children just don't respond as you expected? In this class, you will learn about what is underneath parents' and children's communication and how to unveil great results just by discovering skills you already have and learning a few more to create connection, collaboration and healthy communication with your young child.
- **Cooperation, kindness, and compassion.**
 - Children who have healthy self-esteem, who feel accepted and appreciated, tend to approach life with optimism and confidence. This class will answer questions like: What is self-esteem, how do children "get" it and how do parents "give" it? Parents will leave with strategies to engage with their children in a manner that fosters self-esteem, kindness, and compassion.
- **Helping your kids manage their emotions.**
 - Children are not born knowing how to express or deal with their emotions. Sometimes behavior can tell us more than we think about how they feel. In this class you will learn how to identify emotions behind your child's behavior and help them manage them by connecting and developing new skills.
- **Positive parenting.**
 - Raising children should be considered a form of art. How can we be better parents to our children through positive parenting? In this class you will learn the concept of positive parenting as well as some practical skills and tools to make parenting life easier.
- **Stress management for parents.**
 - It is hard work being a parent. In this class, you will learn how to cope with every day's struggles of being a parent and bring home some practical tools to live a healthier life with your kids.
- **Young kids, behavior, and development.**
 - I am a parent, now what? It seems logical to think that when our children are born that we will know everything we need to know about parenting. But the truth is that no one is born a parent. We learn how to be one. In this class, you will learn about children's development and details about becoming the parent you want to be.



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Kids

- **Communicate so they will hear.**
 - Have you ever wondered why you talk and your children just don't respond as you expected? In this class, you will learn about what is underneath parents' and children's communication and how to unveil great results just by discovering skills you already have and learning a few more to create connection, collaboration and healthy communication with your child.
- **Compassion, kindness, and self-esteem.**
 - Children who have healthy self-esteem, who feel accepted and appreciated, tend to approach life with optimism and confidence. This class will answer questions like: What is self-esteem, how do children "get" it and how do parents "give" it? Parents will leave with strategies to engage with their children in a manner that fosters self-esteem, kindness, and compassion.
- **Helping kids manage their emotions.**
 - Children are not born knowing how to express or deal with their emotions. Sometimes behavior can tell us more than we think about how they feel. In this class you will learn how to identify emotions behind your child's behavior and help them manage them by connecting and developing new skills.
- **Learning disabilities, thriving at school.**
 - Although life with your child may at times seem challenging, it is important to remember that children with learning disabilities symptoms can and do succeed. As a parent, you can help create home and school environments that improve your child's chances for success. In this class, learn strategies for coping with symptoms that help improve your child's life and the harmony of your entire family.
- **Let's talk about bullying, peer pressure, and the internet.**
 - Bullying and peer pressure have always been relevant topic, and now with modern life and the internet, it is crucial to talk more about them. The goal of this class is to engage you through conversation, and activities, to build understanding of how to handle bullying and peer pressure situations.
- **Positive parenting.**
 - Raising children should be considered a form of art. How can we be better parents to our children through positive parenting? In this class you will learn the concept of positive parenting as well as some practical skills and tools to make parenting life easier.
- **Transitions, moving from elementary to middle school.**
 - Middle school can be a tough time for pre-teens. They face many new issues beyond attending a new school including: puberty, tougher academics, more personal responsibilities, switching classes, boy-girl dances, and multiple teachers. Pre-teens may try the boundaries, test the waters, and sometimes test your patience. This fun, light-



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hearted class provides tips and practical advice for preparing pre-teens for middle school.



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Teens

- **Communicate so they will hear.**
 - Are you wondering what happened to that sweet child of yours? Why is it so hard to talk to your teenager? In this class, you will learn about what is underneath parents' and adolescents' communication and how to unveil great results just by discovering skills you already have and learning a few more to create connection, collaboration and healthy communication with your teenager.
- **Helping teens manage their emotions.**
 - Strong emotions, strong reactions, exaggeration of what is really happening...does that sound familiar? It is already hard and demanding to live today's life; it is even harder when your hormones and brain are figuring out how to develop. In this class, you will learn about teenager's development and ways of connecting with your child and helping them cope with these strong emotions.
- **Learning disabilities, thriving at school.**
 - Although life with your child may at times seem challenging, it is important to remember that teenagers with learning disabilities symptoms can and do succeed. As a parent, you can help create home and school environments that improve your teenager's chances for success. In this class, learn strategies for coping with symptoms that help improve your teenager's life and the harmony of your entire family.
- **Positive parenting.**
 - Raising children should be considered a form of art. How can we be better parents to our children through positive parenting? In this class you will learn the concept of positive parenting as well as some practical skills and tools to make parenting life easier.
- **Self-Esteem, compassion, and social media.**
 - Modern life brought us more than only the good things about technology. Now it is time to learn how to deal with the challenges of the new world. In this class, you will learn about self-esteem, compassion and how to talk to your child about social media.
- **Teenagers' Development.**
 - Do you know what is going on with your teenager? Join in this class to learn more about what is really going on in their brains, bodies and emotions.



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Parenting Montana Workshops

Ages 0-4

- Confidence:
 - Whether it's your 3-month-old crying uncontrollably when you leave their sight or your own feelings of inadequacy when trying to respond to your infant's crying, establishing regular ways to build a trusting connection along with teaching your child vital skills will build confidence.
- Discipline
 - Why guidance and discipline for skill building? Whether it's your 3-month-old crying uncontrollably when you leave their sight or your own feelings of inadequacy when trying to respond to your infant's crying, establishing regular ways to build a trusting connection along with teaching your child vital skills will build confidence.
- Eating
 - Your child's openness to try new foods and engage with others around the meal table are essential to developing lifelong healthy eating habits. You can begin by exposing your child to new foods that are just the right level of challenge for them, offer just enough support and patience for them to know they can trust you, and help them recognize and feel a sense of success and empowerment when they master the experience.
- Empathy
 - Your infant's secure and trusting connection with you is pivotal in their first year. You can lay the foundation for growing empathy in your infant as you interact and share love, conversation, and facial expressions.
- Happiness
 - Your child's connections with you and others and their ability to engage in meaningful learning and play are essential to developing lifelong happiness. Today, in the short term, growing happiness can create greater opportunities for connection, cooperation, and enjoyment; a sense of belonging as a member of your family; and a sense of optimism and wellbeing.
- Kindness
 - Children learn about who they are and how they relate to others through sensitive, caring interactions with you. These interactions impact their ability to learn about and manage their feelings and to trust in you as a caregiver. Your focus on kindness with your child will lay a critical foundation of trusting interactions.
- Listening
 - Children learn about who they are and how they relate to others through sensitive, caring interactions with you. These interactions impact their ability to listen, to communicate effectively, to learn about and manage their feelings, and to trust in you as a caregiver. Now that your child is highly mobile, they need to be able to follow your instructions to stay safe in your home and in your neighborhood. Your focus on listening and communicating with your child will lay a critical foundation of trusting interactions.



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- Reading
 - Your child’s experiences including singing, rhyming, and playing with you are essential for developing a healthy brain, growing creativity skills, learning about language and emotions, and strengthening their relationship with you. These experiences will also help them learn to read when they are older.

You can begin by exposing your child to songs, sounds, and books they can explore – even if that means chewing on them in the first years! As time goes on, they will turn to you for new words and stories and will connect language and reading with the joy they feel when they are having fun with you.
- Resilience
 - Your child’s openness to engage in manageable challenges and recover from difficult experiences are essential to developing lifelong resilience. You can begin by exposing your child to challenges that are just the right size for them, offer just enough support for them to know they can trust you, and help them recognize and feel a sense of success and empowerment when they master the experience.
- Responsibility
 - Children learn about who they are and how they relate to others through sensitive, caring interactions with you. These interactions impact their ability to make responsible decisions that are fair, kind, and safe; to learn about and manage their feelings; and to trust in you as a caregiver. Your focus on responsibility is essential to developing lifelong habits of responsible decision making.
- Routines
 - Establishing regular routines can help your family get through the day cooperatively while building vital skills in your child. Routines can help to develop your child’s sense of security and their confidence.

Routines can help them feel safe because they know what to expect and are more able to learn from the rich experiences you have together every day. When there are changes to the routine – expected and unexpected – this will also help your child learn to be flexible and practice adjusting to new situations.
- Talking About Differences
 - Talking about differences between people in positive and non-judgmental ways doesn’t divide children or make them wary or fearful of one another. It bonds them together as a community and allows them to be more respectful and inclusive.
- Tantrums
 - Your child may cry hysterically at the grocery store when you say “No” to a request for candy, or they might stubbornly refuse to leave the house when you are late for a commitment. Learning how to deal with your child’s anger, upset, and the many other accompanying feelings can become a regular challenge if you don’t have plans and strategies prepared for managing them.

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Ages 5-10

- Anger Management
 - Whether it's your five-year-old melting down in frustration over trying to get shoes on by themselves or your ten-year-old staying up late angry that a friend refused to play with them, learning how to deal with anger and its many accompanying emotions can become a regular challenge if you don't create plans and strategies for managing them.
- Back Talk
 - When Montana parents were surveyed, "back talk" rose to the top of the parenting challenges listed. Whether it's your five-year-old screaming, "I hate you," your second grader shouting, "No, I won't go!" when you need them to leave a friend's house, or your nine-year-old crying, "It's all your fault," when they've spilled a plate of spaghetti on the floor, establishing healthy ways of responding to life's most challenging moments in ways that do not harm themselves or others are vital skills your child needs to thrive.
- Bullying
 - Bullying can impact our children and our family in powerful ways. It might be your five-year-old who is repeatedly picked on in school by another child at recess. It might be your seven-year-old who refuses to go to school because of a stomachache, or it could be your ten-year-old who seems to isolate themselves and cry in their room after school but will not talk about the reasons. Learning how to prevent bullying, identify it if it's happening, and deal with it if it becomes an issue, can help parents feel prepared and proactive. It will also, down the road, build skills in self-awareness, self-control, and understanding healthy personal boundaries.
- Chores
 - Whether it's asking your six-year-old to put away their backpack each day, reminding your eight-year-old to take their dishes to the sink after dinner, or battling with a nine-year-old to put yard game equipment away before coming inside, these can become daily challenges if you don't create regular routines. With input from your child in advance, clear roles and responsibilities can be outlined alongside a well-established plan for success.
- Confidence
 - As a parent, you play an essential role in your child's success. There are intentional ways to grow a healthy parent-child relationship while building a sense of confidence in your child that they can work toward their goals and succeed in school and life. Confidence simply means belief in self. But where does that confidence come from? It begins with a trusting relationship you work to cultivate with your child. The bond you have with your child forms a solid foundation from which your child can explore the world. As children develop their social and emotional skills, they will also build their sense of confidence. So, as a parent, you can foster confidence through your relationship with your child and by focusing your attention on helping your child grow social and emotional skills.
- Conflict



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- Whether it's your five-year-old hitting an older brother in frustration, your seven-year-old refusing to get ready for school, or your nine-year-old arguing over play plans with a lifelong friend, establishing healthy ways of working through conflict that do not harm themselves or others includes teaching your child vital skills that will build confidence.
- Discipline
 - When your five-year-old is melting down in frustration and envy over their sister's new set of toys or your ten-year-old is refusing to go to bed, these situations are opportunities to provide guidance and discipline for skill building.
- Friends
 - Your child's ability to get along with others can shape their experiences at the park, in groups, and at school. You can offer them support as they exercise their increasing social awareness and relationship skills.
- Homework
 - Five and six-year-olds will be brand new to the homework experience, and you will have an opportunity to establish positive habits that will stay with them for years to come. Seven, eight, nine, and ten-year-olds will be bringing brand new academic challenges home like reading with competence and learning fractions. Additionally, they may be expected to complete long-term projects. This will take a whole new level of planning and organization. These homework assignments can become a challenge if regular routines are not established.
- Listening
 - Whether it's your five-year-old continuing to play when you've told them you need to leave (for the third time), your seven-year-old not listening to your safety instructions and taking off in a crowd with a friend, or your nine-year-old daydreaming during their teacher's instructions and not knowing how to do their homework, establishing regular ways to practice listening skills can prepare your child for family, school, and life success.
- Lying
 - Whether it's your five-year-old continuing to play when you've told them you need to leave (for the third time), your seven-year-old not listening to your safety instructions and taking off in a crowd with a friend, or your nine-year-old daydreaming during their teacher's instructions and not knowing how to do their homework, establishing regular ways to practice listening skills can prepare your child for family, school, and life success.
- Mixed Messages About Alcohol
 - Children receive many mixed messages about alcohol consumption and its role in their lives and communities. They may see commercials or alcohol products placed in a glamorous context in television shows. They may encounter drunk adults at weddings, festivals, or concerts. These outside messages, though they have an impact, are not as critical as the messages that you and your immediate family and friends send to your children through your actions about alcohol, and it's never too late to become more fully aware of the messages your child is receiving, their



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impacts, and how you can shape the messages you send going forward to promote healthy choices.

- Reading
 - Becoming intentional about a daily reading routine, looking for ways to incorporate reading into your time spent together, and considering the quality of the reading experience can all contribute to your child’s development.
- Routines
 - Establishing regular routines can help your family get through the day cooperatively while building vital skills in your child. Routines can help your child feel safe, because they know what to expect and are better able to learn from the rich experiences you share together every day. Changes to your routine – expected and unexpected – can help your child learn to be flexible and practice adjusting to new situations when you guide them with confidence and sensitivity.
- Sharing
 - Whether it’s your five-year-old breaking down because their friend won’t share their Lego set or your ten-year-old obsessing over the presents they want for their birthday, your child’s relationship with “stuff” can become a daily challenge. Your child’s emerging ability to engage with their peers and become part of a social community is essential to their development.
- Stress
 - Whether it’s your five-year-old breaking down in frustration over trying to get shoes on or your seven-year-old throwing their pencil across the room at homework time because they cannot figure out a problem, stress and how to deal with it can become a daily challenge if you don’t create plans and strategies for dealing with it.
- Tantrums
 - Whether it’s your five-year-old’s frustration over trying to get shoes on by themselves or your ten-year-old staying up late angry that a friend refused to play with them, learning how to deal with anger, upset, and their many accompanying feelings can become a regular challenge if you don’t create plans and strategies for managing them.



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Ages 11-14

- Anger Management
 - Whether it's your eleven-year-old breaking down in frustration over trying to get math homework accomplished or your thirteen-year-old yelling after not being allowed to attend an unsupervised party, anger and its many accompanying feelings can become regular challenges if you don't help your child/teen create plans and strategies for dealing with and expressing their anger.
- Back Talk
 - When Montana parents were surveyed, "back talk" rose to the top of the parenting challenges listed. Whether it's your eleven-year-old screaming, "I hate you!" or your fourteen-year-old crying, "It's all your fault!" when they had a fight with a friend, establishing healthy ways of responding to life's most challenging moments that do not harm oneself or others is a vital skill your child/teen needs to thrive.
- Bullying
 - Bullying can impact your child/teen and your family in powerful ways. It might be your eleven-year-old who is repeatedly picked on in school by a peer at recess. Or, it might be your thirteen-year-old who refuses to go to school because of a stomach ache. Or, it could be your fourteen-year-old who seems to isolate themselves and cry in their room after school but will not talk about the reasons. Learning how to prevent bullying, identify it, and deal with it if it becomes an issue can help you feel prepared and competent.
- Chores
 - Whether it's asking your eleven-year-old to make their bed and turn off the lights each day or reminding your twelve-year-old to rinse the dishes and put them in the dishwasher after dinner, these can become your daily challenges if you don't create regular routines. With input from your child in advance, clear roles and responsibilities can be outlined alongside a well-established plan for success.
- Confidence
 - Whether it's your eleven-year-old confiding in you that they don't feel ready for sixth grade, your twelve-year-old crying that they have no real friends, or your fourteen-year-old hiding homework to avoid facing it, establishing regular ways to build a trusting connection along with teaching your child/teen vital skills will build confidence.
- Conflict
 - Whether it's your eleven-year-old hitting an older sibling in frustration or your thirteen-year-old refusing to get ready for a family event, establishing regular and healthy ways of working through conflict that aren't harmful to themselves or others is essential as your child/teen learns to build healthy relationships. This includes teaching your child/teen vital skills that build confidence.
- Discipline
 - When your eleven-year-old is yelling at you because you won't let them go to a social event on a school night or your fourteen-year-old is attending an



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unsupervised party with alcohol without your knowledge, these situations are opportunities to provide guidance and discipline for skill building.

- Establishing Rules About Alcohol
 - Whether it's discovering the liquor cabinet has been opened by your curious eleven-year-old or arguing over your fourteen-year-old attending a friend's unsupervised party, establishing rules about alcohol can help your family prepare for dealing with challenges cooperatively while building essential skills in your child/teen.
- Friends
 - Your child's/teen's ability to get along with others can shape their experiences in after-school activities, groups, and at school. You can offer them support as they exercise their newly forming social awareness and relationship skills.
- Homework
 - Children/Teens ages 11-14 will require managing a larger and more complex workload and need new study skills. This will take a whole new level of planning and organization. Their homework assignments can become your daily challenges if you don't create regular routines with input from your children/teens in advance, clarify roles and responsibilities, and establish a plan for success.
- Listening
 - Whether it's your eleven-year-old continuing to play video games when you've told them screen time is over or your fourteen-year-old daydreaming during the teacher's instructions and not knowing how to do their homework, establishing regular ways to practice listening skills can prepare your child/teen for family, school, and life success.
- Lying
 - Whether it's your eleven-year-old lying about eating the lunch you packed them for school, your twelve-year-old lying about failing a test, or your fourteen-year-old telling you a friend's parents are home supervising them when they aren't, your child's/teen's ability to tell the truth can become a regular challenge if you don't create plans and strategies.
- Mixed Messages About Alcohol
 - Children/Teens receive numerous mixed messages about alcohol consumption and its place in their lives and in their communities. They may see commercials or alcohol products placed in a glamorous context in shows. They may encounter drunk adults at weddings, festivals, or concerts. Perhaps children/teens in these encounters view those others as having fun, or perhaps, they view them as scary and out of control. These outside messages, though they have an impact, are not as critical as the messages that you and your immediate family and friends send to your child/teen through your actions about alcohol. And, it's never too late to become more fully aware of the messages your child/teen is receiving, their impacts, and how you can shape the messages you send going forward to promote healthy choices.
- Reading



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- Becoming intentional about a daily reading routine, looking for ways to incorporate reading into your family times spent together, and considering the quality of the experience of how you read together can all contribute to a child's/teen's development.
- Routines
 - Establishing regular routines can help your family get through the day cooperatively while building vital skills in your child/teen. Routines can help your child/teen feel safe because they know what to expect and are more able to learn from the rich experiences you have together every day. When there are changes to the routine – expected and unexpected – this will also help your child/teen learn to be flexible and practice adjusting to new situations.
- Stress
 - Whether it's your eleven-year-old throwing their pencil across the room at homework time when they cannot figure out a problem or your fourteen-year-old staying up late worrying about why classmates have been staring at them, stress and how to deal with it can become a daily challenge if you don't create plans and strategies for dealing with it.



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Ages 15-19

- Anger Management
 - Whether it's your fifteen-year-old melting down in frustration over trying to get math homework accomplished or your nineteen-year-old yelling after not being allowed to attend an unsupervised party, anger and its many accompanying feelings can become a regular challenge if you don't help your teen create plans and strategies for dealing with and expressing anger.
- Back Talk
 - When Montana parents were surveyed, "back talk" rose to the top of the parenting challenges listed. Whether it's your fifteen-year-old screaming, "I hate you!" in a fight, your junior in high school shouting, "No, I won't stop!" when screen time is over, or your nineteen-year-old crying, "It's all your fault," when they get rejected by their college of choice, establishing healthy ways of responding to life's most challenging moments in ways that do not harm themselves or others is a vital skill your teen needs to thrive.
- Bullying
 - Bullying can impact your teen and your family in powerful ways. It might be your fifteen-year-old who is repeatedly pushed around on the walk home from school. Or, it might be your seventeen-year-old who refuses to go to school because of a headache. Or, it could be your nineteen-year-old who seems to isolate themselves in their room for hours after school but will not talk about the reasons. Learning to identify, prevent, and deal with bullying can help you feel prepared and competent.
- Chores
 - Whether it's asking your fifteen-year-old to make their bed and turn off their lights each day or reminding your eighteen-year-old to rinse their dishes and put them in the dishwasher after dinner, these can become your daily challenges if you don't create regular routines with input from your teen.
- Confidence
 - Whether it's your fifteen-year-old yelling at a younger brother in frustration, your seventeen-year-old refusing to get ready for a family event, or your nineteen-year-old arguing over hangout plans with a lifelong friend, establishing regular and healthy ways of working through conflict that aren't harmful to themselves or others is essential as your teen learns to build healthy relationships. This includes teaching your teen vital skills that build confidence.
- Conflict
 - Whether it's your fifteen-year-old yelling at a younger brother in frustration, your seventeen-year-old refusing to get ready for a family event, or your nineteen-year-old arguing over hangout plans with a lifelong friend, establishing regular and healthy ways of working through conflict that aren't harmful to themselves or others is essential as your teen learns to build healthy relationships. This includes teaching your teen vital skills that build confidence.
- Discipline
 - When your fifteen-year-old is yelling at you because you won't let them go to a social event on a school night, your seventeen-year-old is hiding their school work



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and claiming they have none, or your nineteen-year-old is refusing to participate in family routines, these situations are opportunities to provide guidance and discipline for skill building.

- Establishing Rules About Alcohol
 - Whether it's discovering the liquor cabinet has been opened by your curious fifteen-year-old, arguing over attending a friend's unsupervised party with your sixteen-year-old, or your nineteen-year-old coming home with alcohol on their breath, establishing clear rules about alcohol can help your family prepare for dealing with challenges cooperatively while building essential skills in your teen.
- Friends
 - Whether it's your fifteen-year-old crying that their friend ignored them or your nineteen-year-old experiencing hurtful comments on their internet post, your teen's current friendships (or lack of) can become your daily challenge. Establishing a trusting connection with your teen and teaching them vital skills will help them grow healthy friendships.
- Homework
 - Teens and emerging young adults are managing a larger and more complex workload and new study skills along with longer-term projects. This will take a whole new level of planning and organization. Layered in with the day-to-day school assignments, there may also be future academic goals they want to reach (like going to college), which will require planning and incremental action steps. Schoolwork and school goals can become your daily challenges if you don't create regular routines with input from your teen in advance, clarify roles and responsibilities, and establish a plan for success.
- Listening
 - Whether it's your fifteen-year-old walking away frustrated while you are talking or your nineteen-year-old daydreaming during their teacher's instructions and not understanding how to do their research paper, establishing regular ways of practicing listening skills can prepare your teen for family, school, and life success.
- Lying
 - Whether it's your fifteen-year-old lying about where they went after school or your seventeen-year-old lying about failing a test, your teen's ability to tell the truth can become a regular challenge if you don't create plans and strategies.
- Mixed Messages About Alcohol
 - Teens receive numerous mixed messages about alcohol consumption and its place in their lives and in their communities. They may see commercials or alcohol products placed in a glamorous context in television shows. They may encounter drunk adults at weddings, festivals, or concerts. Perhaps, teens in these encounters view those others as having fun, or perhaps, they view them as scary and out-of-control. These outside messages, though they have an impact, are not as critical as the messages that you and your immediate family and friends send to your teens through your actions about alcohol. And, it's never too late to become more fully aware of the messages your teen is receiving, their impacts, and how you can shape the messages you send going forward to promote healthy choices.



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- Reading
 - Becoming intentional about a daily reading routine, looking for ways to incorporate reading into your family times spent together, and considering the quality of the experience of how you read together can all contribute to a teen’s development.
- Routines
 - Establishing regular routines can help your family get through the day cooperatively while building vital skills in your teen. Routines can help your teen feel safe because they know what to expect and are better able to learn from the rich experiences you have together every day. When there are changes to the routine – expected and unexpected – this will also help your teen learn to be flexible and practice adjusting to new situations.
- Stress
 - Whether it’s your fifteen-year-old slamming their door shut at homework time because they cannot figure out a problem or your seventeen-year-old staying up late worrying about why their best friend isn’t talking to them, stress and how to deal with it can become a daily challenge if you don’t create plans and strategies for dealing with it