

Connect with your teen

1

LISTEN

Listen more than you speak. Ask open ended questions to encourage more depth.

2

Validate her feelings

Instead of trying to fix the problem, show that you hear and understand her. When she begins to say that she feels like she has no friends at school, say something like, "That must be really lonely." Or "That sounds very difficult."

3

Refrain from asking "WHY?"

Asking WHY can sound accusatory and shut down conversation. Instead, ask "What makes you think that?" or "What sounds fun to you about that?"

4

Short and simple dialogue

Teenagers typically do not like to be lectured. Give her opportunity to respond, and do not be long-winded in your response.

5

Do not allow your emotions to drive your response

Your teenager is more likely to respond in frustration or in anger, but do not reciprocate those emotions. If you are not able to respond kindly, wait to continue the conversation until you both have calmed down.

