

Teenagers' Bill of Rights

Our Rights with Friends:

We all have the right and the privilege to have friends. We can choose our friends based on our own likes and dislikes. We don't have to like the same people everyone else likes or not like someone because they aren't in our "group." Friendship is a personal thing.

We can ask from our friends that they be trustworthy. If we share something with them and ask them not to tell everyone, we can expect that they will keep it just between us. We will give them the same right. If they don't, they have betrayed our trust and our friendship.

It is okay to be honest with our friends. If they do something that hurts us or concerns us, we can talk to them about it. We will be open to their being honest also. This does not mean it is okay to be mean to each other, just that we can talk honestly about our feelings.

We have the right to be respected for the decisions we make. Some of our friends may not understand the choices we make, but they are our choices. In return, we take responsibility for them.

With Parents and Other Adults:

We have the right to have our feelings respected and not compared to the feelings of puppies . . . or any other such put downs. Our feelings are strong and sometimes confusing. It helps if you take our feelings seriously and listen to us before disregarding them.

We feel we have the right to make decisions (some, not all) for ourselves. If we make mistakes we will learn from them, but it is time for us to be more responsible.

Whenever possible, exclude us from your fights. We understand that fighting is part of every relationship, but it is painful for us to be involved. Don't put us in the middle of *any* problem you have with each other.

We agree to treat you with respect and ask that you respect us in return. This includes respecting our privacy.

With Everyone:

We have the right to be loved unconditionally, and our goal is to love you the same.

We have the right to speak our minds, love ourselves, feel our feelings, and strive for our dreams. Please support us by believing in us rather than fearing for us.