

Five Ways to Discipline Teens Without Losing Your Cool

Set Clear Limits.

Establish what behaviors are and are not acceptable. If you are able to do this in concert with your young people, it gives them ownership of a sense of responsibility for maintaining those limits. Make sure that everyone knows what the limits are, and be consistent in enforcing them.

Set Clear Consequences for Exceeding the Limits.

Just as important as the limits you have set are the results for going beyond them. As with limits, establish the consequences for unacceptable behavior with the teens. Be sure that the consequence is reasonable and relevant.

Disapprove of the Action, Not the Person.

Help them work through the behavior and its consequences and give them the opportunity to explore the alternative options for the next time.

Be Patient and Realistic.

Remember they are still kids. It's important to maintain the standards but be sure to do it in a way that allows them room to breathe and grow. Always remember you are the authority but it is not something you have to prove by coming down hard and heavy. A deft and good-natured touch will have a lasting impact. Keep your sense of humor healthy and don't sweat the small stuff.

Always Show Them You Love Them.

Be sure they understand that you set these limits because you care and that maintaining a relationship with them is very important to you.