Ideas for Coping

What to do when your easy to understand child turns into an unfamiliar teenager

- Say something to yourself like: “calm down”, “relax”, “I’m OK”
- When you get annoyed, leave the room
- Count to ten before you do anything
- Go somewhere you can’t be heard and SCREAM!
- Thump a pillow or a cushion
- Sit down, close your eyes and imagine a peaceful scene
- Relax, put your feet up and breathe slowly and deeply
- Go out for walk in the fresh air
- Try not to worry

Remember it’s OK to do things just for yourself

People who can help

It might be worth talking to your family doctor, who can put you in touch with relevant specialist help. Don’t forget that health visitors aren’t just there for under 5s – they can help with teenage problems too.

Some of the helplines can be useful if what you need is a friendly voice. Try Parentline on 0808 002 222.

For specific problems:

- Family Rights Group Advice Line 0800 731 1696
- Hope (UK) 0207 928 0848
- Mindinfoline 0345 660 163
- National Drugs Helpline 0800 77 66 00
- NHS Direct Health Information Service 0845 4647
- Shelterline 0808 800 4444
- Step Family Scotland 0131 225 5800
- Young Minds 0800 018 2138

When the going gets tough.....try talking

HELP IS AT HAND!
Talk to your teenager

It's never too late to talk...but if you've been having rows in the past, it's sometimes difficult to get back to talking sensibly.

- Try talking when you're not facing each other – in a car or bus is good, or while you're doing something like washing-up together.

- Try talking when you're watching a soap on TV – often the characters will be having the same sort of problems as you.

- Try talking with someone else there, if you think you're likely to get angry.

- Shouting at each other is not the answer.

Remember that disagreeing with your parents is part of growing up. Did you do it yourself, when you were a teenager?

Although this leaflet was written for parents or carers, a lot of it applies to teenagers too!

Talk to friends and family

You're not the only one who's ever had problems with teenage children!

Get some advice, get some new ideas – you don't have to do what they suggest, if you don't want to.

Often just talking is enough.

Plan Ahead

- If you can't have time alone now to talk, think about what you want to discuss at a later date.

- Plan a time for discussion when you're both calm and ready to talk.

- Agree ground rules which are suitable to you both.

- Organise an outing later in the week so you have something to look forward to.

Sometimes, problems seem to sort themselves out. Sometimes they need a lot of effort...

Get professional help

When things get out of hand, there are people and organisations to help you. There's a list of some of them on the other side of the leaflet.

Remember that staff in all these places are used to helping people in trouble. That's what they're there for. They won't be disapproving, or shocked, and they won't make you do anything you don't want to do.

All the same, it's often frightening to get in touch with one of these organisations for the first time.

You may find that the person you speak to first will suggest you talk to someone else as well: there are lots of helping agencies, and there wasn't room for all of them on the leaflet.

It's often a good idea to start with someone you know, like your doctor, or a health visitor, or community worker you've already met.

If you do need to see someone else they may be able to make the appointment for you.