

Disciplining a Pre-Teen and Teenager

1. **Compose yourself.**

2. **Take back your power.** You are in charge of your inner state; teens are in charge of their inner states. You are not “making” them angry, and they are not “making” you angry. You are both making the choice to feel angry. You can reclaim power with your words. Try saying, “I’m going to take away your computer” instead of, “You’re making me have to take away your computer.”

3. **Focus your intention.** You need one intention: To help your teen make decisions that will ensure safety. Dispose of any intention to make them behave or to make them happy. Dispose of any illusion that they will accept your rules without a challenge. All three of these are parenting myths.

4. **Focus on what you want to occur.** In regard to curfew, what you want is for your teen to be home at a reasonable hour. Work with your teen to define what “reasonable” is for that event. Conclude with stating the limit in very specific terms. For example, “You must be back home no later than 11p.m.”

5. **Stay calm when your teen challenges the limit.** Repeat the choices: “You can go to the party and be back by 11 p.m., or you can stay home. Which would be best for you tonight?”

6. **Set a consequence and deliver it.** Resist the temptation to lecture or lose your composure. Reacting with anger diverts attention from the action to you, the mean, angry, unfair parent. However, if you dole out the consequence with some empathy, your teens may leave the situation with angst over the mistake instead of angst over your negative reaction.

- See more at: <http://yourteenmag.com/2010/05/interview-with-dr-becky-bailey/3/>