



COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR
TWEENS
(AGES 9 TO 12) OR YOUR
TEENS
MAY SEEM IMPOSSIBLE...

...**AT TIMES.** Instead of giving up or remaining frustrated, remind yourself that even as they are growing and demanding independence, they are still somewhat afraid and need your unconditional support.

Consider adopting these practices to improve your relationship:

- * **Give your teen your time and attention.** Let her know that what she has to say is important, and listen without distraction.
- * Just as it drives you crazy when your teen rolls his eyes at everything you say, **your nonverbal cues can irritate him.** Try talking in the car or during a time when you're standing side-by-side rather than facing each other, so your teen won't feel like he's being interrogated.
- * **Consider not only what you want to say, but how you say it** when talking to your teen. If you are relaxed and calm, your teen will feel less defensive and more comfortable opening up to you.
- * **Be compassionate.** You may have had your heart broken or fought with your best friend when you were a teenager too, but don't expect your child to respond the same way you did. Make sure your teen knows you respect his feelings.

As your teen sorts through multiple experiences and emotions, sometimes she needs a **safe place** to talk. Don't feel like you must always offer solutions to her problems. **Being there when she needs you can often be enough.**