

How to get more cooperation from your teen

Every parent has some type of parent-child agreement whether it is written out or just understood. However, parents who have tried an agreement and been unsuccessful may not have adequately followed through with their part of the agreement or they may not have effectively matched up the agreements according to the six subcategories as described on page 3.

The key getting the most cooperation from your teen is to effectively match up both sides of any of the three categories. Common negotiable items within each of the six subcategories can be viewed at *What Parents Want From Their Teen* and *What Teens Want From Their Parents* in www.jerryciffone.com.

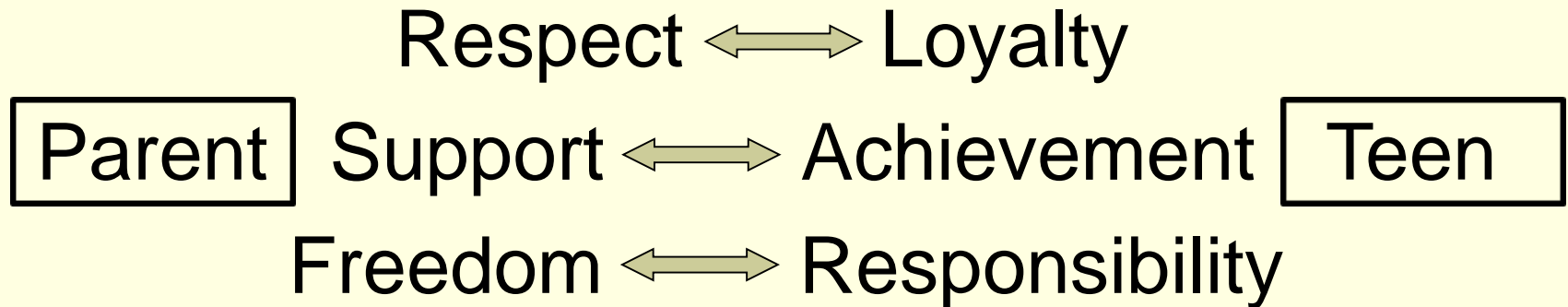
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Pages 4-8 provide some examples of mutual agreements that have been selected by each side.

If you're unhappy about the relationship you have with your teen and contracting seems too much for you to handle on your own you may want to consider seeking the help of a professional family counselor in the community. The items, available through the links provided on the previous page can still be useful to you. You could go through them and pick 5 or 6 that are the most important to you and your teen and those items can serve as goals for family counseling.

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Create/maintain a good balance between:



These six subcategories were first described by David Elkind in his 1981 book *The Hurried Child: Growing Up Too Fast Too Soon*.

Parent-Teen Contracting Examples

- Sarah will spend time hanging out with mom doing things like watching a movie, eating a meal together, or lounging on the patio. Mom agrees not to use her cell phone or bring up a “hot topic” during these hang out times.
- Mom will not embarrass Emily in front of her friends. Emily will bring her friends over and introduce new friends to mom.
- Dad will be concerned about Nicole’s “total life” rather than just how she is doing in school. He will have daily conversations with her about other aspects of her life. Nicole will (without prompts) take responsibility for completing her homework to the extent that she is able to maintain a B average.

Parent-Teen Contracting Examples

- Mom will avoid confronting Ashley during dinner, while doing homework, just before bedtime, or before leaving for school. Mom also agrees to not text any upsetting messages to Ashley while at school. Ashley will be available to meet with mom for calm discussion of any issues before 8pm.
- Laura will get her iPhone back when she has a C or better in all of her classes. Laura will not use her iPhone for any reason after 10 pm on school nights. To keep her phone Laura must maintain a C or better in all classes at grading periods.
- Dad will let Tyler stay out until midnight on non-school nights. Tyler will meet with dad at midnight to discuss (openly and honestly) the events of the evening.

Parent-Teen Contracting Examples

- Dad will not look over Rachel's shoulder when she is on the computer and will not look at her phone without her permission. Rachel will not engage in any activities that would endanger her reputation or emotional well-being.
- Dad will let Devon make his own decisions even if failure is a possibility. Devon will think of the pros and cons to the decision and make the best choice as much as possible. If Devon has made a mistake he will tell his dad what he learned from the mistake and how he can/will avoid doing it again.
- After Andrew has completed all of his homework for the evening he will be allowed to have the use of the computer for leisure purposes until 9 pm on school nights.

Parent-Teen Contracting Examples

- If mom gives Mark a “no” answer and Mark would like an explanation mom will give an explanation within a stated period of time, example “in 10 minutes” or “in one hour,” etc. If mom is too upset to talk the same understanding will apply.
- Morgan will share personal things with mom. Mom agrees to not tell her friends what Morgan told her. Mom will also check with Morgan before telling dad.
- Austin can drive the family car to school as long as he drives safely and attends all of his classes every day
- Kelsey will keep all promises made to mom. Mom will keep all promises made to Kelsey.

Parent-Teen Contracting Examples

- When upset Mom will let Nina give a full explanation and will refrain from interrupting Nina. Nina will express herself in a calm, non-sarcastic manner. If Nina is too upset to talk she will write it down and give it to mom.
- Mom will decide yes or no early enough in the evening so that John can make plans with friends. When making plans John will take the feelings and/or needs of parents and siblings into consideration.
- Mom will stop comparing Alexis to Alana. Alexis will try her best in school and her best with her homework. Alexis will ask for extra help from her teachers when she needs it.