Navigating the Teen Years
Managing Conflict
Children are constantly testing, attempting to see how much they can get away with – how far you will let them go – and they secretly hope you will not let them go too far.

- Ann Landers
Objectives

- Pick your conflicts
- Parent’s role
- Three-step model
- What NOT to do
Pick your conflicts

• Is this battle worth fighting over?
• Win “the battle” lose “the war.”
• “Sponge” parenting
• Parents absorb what their teen “dumps” on them after a hard day or dealing with an issue – recognize what it is and don’t take it personally.
• Don’t turn a venting session into a battle.
• Moral and value lessons are the ones to fight over.
Parent’s role

Three types of parenting

1. **Permissive**
   - You focus on being your child’s “friend” avoid parenting.

2. **Authoritarian**
   - You demand a lot from your child – military style.
   - Do what I say “Because I said so…”

3. **Authoritative (most effective parenting style)**
   - Setting limits – but being reasonable and flexible
Three-step model

1. Accept your teen
   • Talk less, listen more – respect who they are.
   • Keep the teen and the problem separate – focus on the facts.

2. Set limits
   • Be reasonable and flexible.

3. Allow expression
   • It is normal to feel negative emotions at appropriate levels.
   • Anger is o.k. as long as it is not insulting.
What not to do

• Guilt – do not play the “guilt” card.
• Avoidance – don’t ignore conflict.
• It is not about “winning.”
• Don’t pick wrong place, wrong time.
• Don’t throw in the kitchen sink (fight fair).
• Don’t battle over conflicts with no possible resolution.
Questions?
Thank You

Please contact your Employee Assistance Program with any questions