



Victim Assistance Newsletter

Working with Teenagers by Ruthanna Battilana

Sometimes it seems as if they are determined to drive you crazy. But the teenage years are when your child-becoming-an-adult is trying to figure out which behaviors are acceptable and which are not. They try things with you because you are closest to them both emotionally and physically - you care about them and you live in the same house. Your job is to help them understand that there are still rules that they have to follow - no matter how grown up they think they are - to show them that there are some limits on what they can do and can't do. So give it a shot...

1. Be consistent.

This is the most important rule. If its "no" the first time, then you must say "no" every time. Parents must stick together also - don't let your teen play one parent against the other.

2. Do not give in to pressure.

It's a teenager's job to try to pressure you to change your mind. Don't give in. Once they find that they can pressure you into changing one rule, they will pressure you to change another rule and another and another ...

3. Set up the rules before you need them.

Sit down and talk it over. When everyone is calm/in a good mood, sit down and set up some rules. For example, "It's time for a new start - now that you are in a new school/a higher grade/now that you are age..."

4. State what you think the rule should be, then ask the teenager what they think.

"I think you should be in by midnight.

What do you think is a fair time?" There are some things that you don't want to negotiate on - for example, no drugs - but find some other places where you can give in a little so your teen thinks that they have some say in making the rules.

5. Agree on consequences if the rules are broken.

"What do you think should be the punishment if you come in late?" No consequence is not one of the choices - there should always be negative consequences for breaking the rules.

6. Agree on rewards.

What are some positive things can the child get if he/she follows the rules? Rewards can be either more privileges or some thing they want.

7. Set a time frame.

"Let's see how this works for the rest of the summer/for the first semester." But don't delay rewards for too long. Teenagers don't have that long of a time frame - they want instant rewards.

8. Put it in writing.

Post it on the wall/on the refrigerator - so it is in plain view. Then you can just point to the rule when a problem comes up.

Try to avoid getting into a physical confrontation with a teenager over rules - it just makes them think that whoever is stronger physically will win the argument. And what happens when they get bigger than you? Also remember that you are training them to be good parents - so you can enjoy your grandchildren !!

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Domestic Violence Safety Planning by Joseph Taussi

Domestic violence occurs when one person in a relationship uses a pattern of behaviors to control the other person. People usually think of domestic violence as physical abuse however, it can also be psychological or emotional abuse. Any other controlling behaviors such as verbal abuse, threats or sexual abuse are also forms of domestic violence. The important thing to remember is that domestic violence is about power and control not anger.

Domestic violence is one of the most under reported crimes in the United States. It is estimated that over 1 million people are victims of domestic violence every year. While most of the victims are women, men make up about 15% of those victimized.

You can't control your partner's abusive behavior, but you can take steps to protect yourself from harm. Your abusive partner may have told you, or led you to believe, that the abuse is your fault. Remember that the abuse is **not** your fault and that changing your own behavior won't control it.

But you *can do some things to better protect yourself* before, or when, abuse happens. If you are in an abusive relationship, you may already have strategies that you use to protect yourself. While you may not be consciously making these strategic decisions, they are part of your safety plan. Safety planning is nothing more than formalizing these strategies in advance so that they are available when you need them. Even if you aren't ready to leave your partner, or if the violence hasn't escalated yet, you should consider making a safety plan.

A safety plan is a personalized and practical plan for reducing your risk of being hurt by your partner. By thinking it through in advance, a safety plan can help you avoid dangerous situations and know the best way

to react when you are in danger. An effective safety plan makes changes to your daily lifestyle to better protect you in your home, school, work and social life. These changes can be big or small. Your safety plan can also help you to escape a violent situation as safely as possible and prepare you to end your relationship when you are ready. There is no right or wrong way to create a safety plan. Everyone's situation is different and your safety plan should address your unique set of circumstances. Remember that abusive relationships change, so your safety plan will need to reflect those changes. Review and revise your safety plan as often as necessary. If children are part of the relationship, don't forget to include plans for their safety as well.

Prepare a safety plan and try to follow it whenever possible. Consider involving someone you trust to help you create the plan that works best for you and your situation. When creating your safety plan, ask yourself these important questions: What can I do to stay safe in my home? How do I safely get to work or school? Is there a safe place I can go when abuse happens? Who can I call if I need help quickly?

There are many resources available on the Internet to help you create a safety plan. Use these resources as guidelines to help you protect yourself. No plan can guarantee your safety but by planning ahead may reduce the risk of violence and increase your chances of avoiding serious or life threatening injury.

Resources:

www.domesticviolence.org/personalized-safety-plan

www.ncvc.org/ncvc/main.aspx (click on link for safety plan)

www.azcourts.gov/Portals/33/Safety-Plan.pdf