

Connecting with your child

Benefits that will last a lifetime

Today's fast-paced, pressured-filled culture can often leave little time to nurture the relationship between you and your child. Here are a few suggestions to strengthen that unique bond:

- Connecting with your child can be as easy as **participating with them in activities** they enjoy. You don't have to learn to skateboard, but you could help build the ramp and video them, or help with soccer drills in the backyard. Conversation comes naturally when you are having fun together.
- Make it a priority to spend **one-on-one time** together doing things they enjoy. Agree that you'll turn your phone off and have them do the same.
- Have **yogurt/coffee** with your child once a week. Hang out without an agenda. This conveys that you enjoy spending time with them.
- What or how much you say is not as important as sometimes **just listening**. This allows you to build a relationship in which your child feels safe and you earn the right to be heard.
- Have **family dinners** as often as possible. This is a great opportunity to listen, engage as a family, hear about one another's day, talk about current events, and ask your child their opinions. They love it when you value their input.
- If you are a working parent, let your kids know that even though work may have a lot of demands on you, **THEY** are still **your number one priority**.



- **Praise and give affirmations** more often than you criticize. For every criticism, you should have 10 affirmations. If you need to correct them, focus on the behavior instead of a character trait. ("It really helps me out when you remember to load your dishes," rather than, "You are so lazy; you never load your dishes!")
- Just because your kids are growing up doesn't mean they don't want to be **tucked into bed**. Great conversations can happen in the quiet of night when your child has had a chance to wind down and process their day.

- Don't underestimate the **influence** you much they value your opinion. meaningful connections.

- **Parents can be the MOST influential**

For more helpful information, please visit our



have on your kids and how Embrace opportunities for

voice in their child's life.

website at www.teenesteem.org