

# AGES 15-19

In Montana, we want what's best for our kids. We want them to be confident, respectful, and make healthy choices.

Here are tips from ParentingMontana.org that address common issues for children ages 15–19.

Visit ParentingMontana.org to find tools that address these and other issues for children at every age.

## Stress

During the school year, the stress level that teens experience may be at higher levels than adults experience. This stress can have a direct impact on their ability to choose healthy habits like eating well, sleeping enough, and getting exercise. At times, being a parent or in a parenting role can be a big source of stress. Along with teens, parents and those in a parenting role must also learn ways to deal with stress so they can model and teach coping skills.

- Ask about sources of stress and reflect what you hear.
- Explore the mind-body connection.
- Discuss challenges.
- Model managing stress.
  - Get exercise and fresh air.
  - Practice deep breathing.
  - Create quiet time.
  - Set a goal for a daily connection.
  - Notice, name, and accept your feelings.
- Learn together.
- Teach how to stop thinking about negative experiences over and over.
- Recognize small steps along the way.
- Build celebrations into routines.



## Discipline for Skill Building

Your teen will naturally test limits and break rules. Mistakes or misbehaviors are a normal part of development and necessary for learning. As a parent or one in a parenting role, you have the opportunity to transform a poor choice into a teachable moment. Teaching your teen social and emotional skills can decrease future mistakes or poor choices.

Discover your teen's motivation for the misbehavior.

- Every child seeks their parent's attention and requires it for their very survival. Teens need to learn how to ask for attention appropriately.
- Power struggles can press our hot buttons. Your teen may be feeling out of control and needing to regain some power in their life.
- Avoiding failure can lead a teen to procrastinate, refuse, or claim "boredom" as a reason not to engage in a task.
- Revenge may appear as retaliation for real or perceived hurts and is a sign that your child needs ongoing emotional support.

Model the skills.

- Skills are developed through watching others and learning from their behavior. As a parent, you are modeling for your teen. Share examples when you demonstrate self-control and self-discipline.

Focus on decision making.

- Ask your teen about their thought process and whether the outcome was positive or negative.

Intentionally practice.

- Social and emotional skills can be practiced with intention and on an ongoing basis.

**Learn about all this and more by visiting  
ParentingMontana.org**



Brought to you by the Offices of Child Care, SAMHSA, and Montana DPHHS. The views and opinions contained in the publication do not necessarily reflect those of SAMHSA or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and should not be construed as such.