

How To Get Along With Teenagers

BY VAL FARMER
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Besides the mountain of work and sacrifice it takes to raise young children, the second biggest hurdle to parenting often comes in the teenage years when teens begin their journey for independence in earnest. Parenting is so broad, so inclusive, so demanding, and so individualized that it is hard to come up with general principles that fit everyone.



Val FARMER

Here are seven principles to make your path smoother.

1. Really love your children. This means going out of your way for them - meeting their needs and being dependable in your concern and attention. Take time to teach them what they need to know and stay connected emotionally with their lives. This foundation of unconditional love starts in infancy, continues through childhood and cushions relationships during the teenage years.

Too many parents are too wrapped up in their own lives. They aren't as involved as they need to be with their children. This is a challenge in our complicated, fast-paced, work-oriented culture and lifestyle.

Children need a backdrop of loving attention and sacrifice to develop an attachment bond. This gives firm discipline a chance to work without harming the quality of the overall relationship.

2. Give respect and freedom. Another way of loving your teen is to respect his or her individuality and opportunity to make choices for him or herself. Parents can be too intrusive, bossy and controlling of teens in order for their own lives to go smoother.

Allow room for thinking, privacy, negotiations and discussion. Be willing to be influenced by reason and allow your teen to make his or her own decisions within basic outside limits. Those limits need to be clear and understood. Other than standing firm on basic values, be easy-going, accepting and flexible about their choices.

Explain and reason with teens instead of ordering or demanding. This takes patience as their reasoning is often self-centered and based on a short-term perspective. Help them explore their own interests and talents without taking over and pushing them for your sake.

Be a good listener, recognize their valid points, be willing to explain yourself and negotiate with them. This is difficult because they are generally poor at negotiating. If you are a good listener, your teen will not be as reactive when you don't agree.

3. Be a team player with your spouse. Form a united front when it comes to discipline. Support each other's discipline in front of the children even if you disagree with your spouse's approach. Work through your differences in parenting style, rules and consequences in private. Don't side in with your child against your spouse.

Use your spouse as a resource and a sounding board for parenting issues. You'll need all your eyes, ears and wits about you if you are going to keep up with problems that

come up in the family. If you're a single parent, find a trusted confidant with whom you can discuss parenting issues.

4. Have a system of discipline, not your temper. You are human and are bound to lose your temper occasionally while raising children. However, it shouldn't be a part of the discipline process. Temper outbursts used to control behavior are self-defeating. They usually lead to an escalation of hostility and further displays of temper by both you and your teenager.

Don't apply consequences in anger. Take whatever time you need to calm down and think through a situation before starting the discipline process. Physical punishment or aggression is wrong for teenagers - or for children of almost any age.

Think through your basic family rules and consequences and discuss them ahead of time with your teens. Allow their ideas to help fine tune a system they fully understand.

With common understandings, your discipline can be matter-of-fact without emotion getting in the way. You don't have to think on-the-spot or allow your emotion to be a part of the punishing process. Tolerate their emotions without escalating conflict.

Teenagers are inventive and will discover any loopholes and new situations you haven't thought about. When they confront you with something new, take the time to think through the consequences and the new rule before you give any on-the-spot discipline you may regret.

5. Be consistent in your follow through. A rule isn't a rule when the consequences aren't applied. Exceptions should be rare or your teen will expect every time to be the exception. Have a few rules as possible, keep them simple but be willing to back up the rules you do have. Don't be afraid to be the "bad guy" and incur their displeasure for a time.

6. Expect courtesy and respect in the way they talk to you. Understand the difference between legitimate expression of feeling and back talk. Have clear understandings that certain demeaning forms of address such as profanity, sarcasm, contempt and name calling will not be tolerated. Follow the same rules of courtesy and respect you expect from them.

7. Have fun as a family and keep the overall tone of the family positive. Make time for the family. Do fun things together. Make memories. Don't save up your interactions for when they do something wrong.

Admire them. Find good in what they do. Encourage them. Compliment them. Take interest in their accomplishments and activities. Notice and thank them for what they do well. Enjoy them as much as you can so when inevitable conflict occurs, it will be only a small part of your relationship.

For more information on parenting, visit Val Farmer's website at www.valfarmer.com.

Val Farmer is a clinical psychologist specializing in family business consultation and mediation with farm families. He lives in Wildwood, Missouri and can be contacted through his website.

VISITING HOURS

Exploring Health Care Compliance

BY JEAN HUNHOFF
Avera Sacred Heart Hospital

Compliance with health care laws and regulations have been a concern to health care providers since the days of Ancient Babylon. Some 3,751 years later in the United States, new fraud-fighting laws combine with a confounding system of health care reimbursement to prevent inept health care practices.

The core mission of a hospital is to provide quality care to its patients. Quality of care has many dimensions, ranging from access to health care and professional competence to the appropriate environment for care. Shortcomings can result in direct harm to patients because of substandard care or indirect harm because of a lost opportunity to receive higher quality care. These institutions are governed by boards of directors and, whether elected or appointed, boards are often composed of members of a community who may know very little about health care delivery or what constitutes quality care. Nonetheless, the boards have a fiduciary duty to their institutions as a whole, and Medicare places the responsibility for quality in hospitals squarely on the shoulders of the boards.

Health care compliance is the most perilous and compelling topic that today's health care providers and executives face. Since the early 1990s, Congress has enhanced legislation that allows the federal government to more aggressively seek out violations of the technical requirements for reimbursement under federally funded health care programs. The increased level of scrutiny over health care compliance is a fact of business in today's world.

Basic to the compliance program at Avera Sacred Heart is the Code of Ethical Behavior by which each employee abides. The code is based on the integrity of the organization to achieve its objectives in a manner consistent with the mission of Avera Health. Code components include:

- to know what compliance is
- ask when there is question of compliance
- report when there is violation of compliance.

Compliance begins the delivery of health care in accordance to: the rules of South Dakota Hospital Licensure, criteria for Medicare and Medicaid certification and accreditation by the Joint Commission.

Compliance with Patient/Resident Rights as publicly stated in our distributed materials



is a function carried out by all employees. Marketing and Public Relations practices must reflect what is actually provided by the organization to the public. Confidentiality of patient information is of utmost importance. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) requires strict adherence as to what patient information can be shared with health care providers and the general public. It also includes requirements for providers to notify individuals when their medical information has been breached.

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) is the agency of the Federal government with authority for oversight and prosecution for fraud and abuse. The agency has developed elements for an effective program for organizations to implement to prevent violations of the laws.

The first element is written standards of conduct. Avera Sacred Heart has the code of conduct which affects all employees and clearly delineates commitment to compliance by the hospital's Board of Trustees, management and all providers operating under the hospital's control. The standards comply with all federal and state standards with an emphasis on preventing fraud and abuse.

A second element includes the designation of a Compliance Officer within Avera Sacred Heart that reports directly to the CEO and has direct access to the Board of Directors. This individual coordinates both the diverse groups and individuals within the organization to implement and maintain an effective compliance program.

The third element is education and training. All levels of staff receive training on compliance during their orientation process and annually. The training programs highlight the compliance program, summarize fraud and abuse laws, and emphasize accurate documentation of services provided.

The fourth element focuses on audits or measurements of compliance with our stan-

dards. Routinely, over the course of a year, audits of patient charts are carried out for compliance with reimbursement and coding guidelines. Center for Medicare/Medicaid has implemented a nationwide program that will target all providers for reimbursement for appropriate levels of care. Recovery Audit Contractors (RACs) have begun auditing provider claims to ensure that the appropriate level of care was billed. Hospitals as well as all provider types are monitored and audited by the RACs for specific services provided.

The fifth element is implementing an internal reporting of processes. This includes open lines of communication between the compliance officer and the employees. Employees must be provided opportunity for communication of concerns/issues beyond a face-to-face meeting. This is done through availability of a "hot line" for quick and easy access and written report through the Human Resources office. Most importantly, this is an affirmative obligation of each employee to report compliance issues. In addition, the organization must ensure that the employee can report noncompliant behavior without fear of retribution.

An organization-wide compliance committee oversees the hospital's compliance program. This committee monitors results of audit activities, prioritizes work plans and monitors changes in compliance rules and regulations.

The sixth element deals with disciplinary mechanisms. The OIG believes the compliance program should include a written policy statement setting for the degrees of disciplinary actions that may be imposed on Board Directors, managers and employees.

Finally the last element is investigation and remediation. Prompt investigation of a compliance issue is a necessity as is proactive response to non-compliant activities. As appropriate, such steps may include a corrective action plan, the repayment of any overpayments, and a report to criminal and/or civil law enforcement authorities if applicable.

The culmination of the above elements comprise the Avera Sacred Heart Compliance Plan. It is the responsibility and commitment of Avera Sacred Heart to our community to ensure and affect a proactive compliance program.

This weekly column is produced by the public relations office at Avera Sacred Heart Hospital to promote healthy lifestyles and provide useful medical information to our community.

Developing A Grandparent's 'Inner Awareness'

BY CAROL MAYER GUTHMILLER
P&D Correspondent

The package came in the mail in the middle of the day. It was with the rest of the circulars, bills and our daily paper that hubby brought in and laid on the table.

My daughter told me it was coming so I knew what it was. After my major work for the day was complete I poured myself a cup of tea and opened up the manila package.

There she was, all grown up, posing for her graduation picture, smiling at us the beautiful smile she has given us for the past seventeen years. I didn't know whether to cry or rejoice.

Jani is second in a large and wonderful family of eight children. She was our first granddaughter. I did not know back then that we would be blessed with eight more. When she was born I rejoiced that I could now buy pretty dresses

and relate to a female child through her growing up years. And that I did, at the very beginning.

Life has a way of changing our direction. We think we are headed one way when "bam", something happens and we have to go another. That is what happened with my relationship with Jani Lyn. When she was about ten years of age the family moved to a small town in Iowa, five hours away from us, where Jani's father was called to pastor a church. There went the family of five to the "hinter land," to my way of thinking. I wouldn't get to see them as I did when they lived only an hour and a half away.

I guess you could call it a period of mourning because that is



Carol GUTHMILLER

what my heart and mind went through. It was a period of loss that was eventually followed by our son and wife coming back to farm and beginning their family. That served to fill my sense of loss.

We did keep in contact with that large family of eight children. We would travel to see them and they would travel back to the farm so we could be together.

Jani was home schooled until her high school years. She became instrumental in helping the growing family with daily life. She is a high energy person full of things to do and places to go. That force of energy has spiraled her through all the high school and church activities that opened

up to her. She became one of the major players of the girl's basketball team she joined. She put hours of hard work into that endeavor.

In a recent letter her mother wrote "Jani is receiving many honors. She was chosen, along with some other seniors, to be on a short KWWL news highlight. She was awarded the Governor's Scholarship and gets to meet him and take her picture with him. She was also picked "Best of Center" at her vocal solo contest so she will perform at the college in Ames."

As I read all of this my thoughts were "this doesn't surprise me a bit. I knew she was a sparkling gem when she was just beginning to toddle." Grandmothers know these things. They don't have to be told. We have an "inner awareness" into the makings of our grandchildren. No, we don't have to be told.

SOCIAL SECURITY FOR YOU:

Information For Those Who Serve In The Military

JENNIFER HLADKY
Public Affairs Specialist

On Memorial Day, it's important to remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation. We at Social Security honor the heroism and courage of our military service members and mourn for those who have given their lives in defense of freedom.

It's also important to recognize those service members who are still with us, especially those who have recently been wounded. They've served us; likewise we serve them.

Earnings for active duty military service or active duty training have been covered under Social Security since 1957. Social

Security also has covered inactive duty service in the Armed Forces reserves (such as weekend drills) since 1988.

If you served in the military before 1957, you did not pay Social Security taxes, but we gave you special credit for some of your service.

You can get both Social Security benefits and military retirement. Generally, there is no reduction of Social Security benefits because of your military retirement benefits. You'll get your full Social Security benefit based on your earnings.



Jennifer HLADKY

When you reach age 65, you'll also be eligible for Medicare. If you have health care insurance from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) or under the TRICARE or CHAMPVA program, your health benefits may change or end when you become eligible for Medicare. You should contact the VA, the Department of Defense, or a military health benefits advisor for more information.

If you've served in the Armed

Forces and you're planning your retirement, you'll want to read our publication, Military Service and Social Security at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10017.html.

You also may want to visit the Military Service page of our Retirement Planner, available at www.socialsecurity.gov/retire2/veterans.htm.

Finally, find out about expedited benefits for wounded warriors at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10131.html

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Braunesreither-Devine
Bob Braunesreither and Kim Braunesreither along with Dan and Jeanne Devine are happy to announce the engagement of their children: Whitney

Braunesreither and Travis Devine. The bride is a 2008 graduate of Yankton High School and a 2009 graduate of Western Iowa Tech, in Sioux City, IA, with a degree in Surgical Technology, and is a Certified Surgical Technician at Avera Sacred Heart Hospital in Yankton.

The groom is a 2004 graduate of Yankton High School, attended college at South Dakota State University in Brookings, SD, and is an Insurance Agent at Midwest Insurance Agency in Yankton.

The couple is planning a July 16, 2011, wedding in Yankton.

SCHOLASTICS

YHS Band Honors Awarded

Honor awards were recently awarded to Yankton High School Band members during honor awards held at YHS.

Receiving Letter awards were: Paige Anderson, Traci Eilers, Kaitlyn Erickson, Alex Heglin, Olivia Hopewell, Jerrica Huber, Jacob Johnson, Racheal Johnson, Alyssa Lange, Nicole Muilenberg, Erik Metheny, Abbie Mitchell, Katelyn Munyer, Allison Olson, Alex Opsahl, Kaitlyn Poppe, Michael Posch, Shelby Rolfs, Ashley Rowell, Bre Russaw-Griffin, Sara Santos, Bryan VanMeeteren, Daniel Vudi and Matt Watt.

Additional Letter Bars were awarded to: Trevor Bailey, Chance Sorenson, Katherine Fiedler, Carrie Pospishil, Emily Niebrugge, Colton Lange, Jessica Mathis, Hannah Lambertz, Annelise Curran and Schuyler Boyd.

Outstanding Freshmen: Matt Watt and Amber Livingston
Outstanding Sophomores: Evan Bergesen and Abbie Mitchell
Outstanding Juniors: Ashley Rowell and Chance Sorenson
Outstanding Seniors: Katherine Fielder and Trevor Bailey
Directors Award of Excellence was awarded to Colton Lange.

Senior Citizens: Please Join Us For Coffee, Cookies, Conversation and FREE BINGO
Thursday, May 19 • 2PM ~ West Building

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