

Preparing Youth for a Smooth Transition into Adulthood

Leaving the nest is an emotional rollercoaster where young adults oscillate between massive excitement and crippling anxiety. On one hand, there'll be no one around to tell them what to do, but on the other, they'll have to face challenges on their own without help from mom and dad.



It's a major life change and a difficult transition for many young adults.

To make this transition as smooth as possible, parents can work with their teens during adolescence to get them [ready to become an adult](#). After all, every parent's goal is to raise independent, responsible, well-adjusted adults who can make a positive contribution to society.

Adolescence is actually the best time to prepare your teens for adulthood. They're already chafing at your rules, seeking more freedom and independence — and probably driving you half-crazy in the process. However, before they can fly solo, and you feel safe releasing them to face the world,

teens need to know some [vital aspects of handling themselves](#) in the real world.

Here are some of the basics you need to teach them if they're to become capable adults:

1. Financial independence

One of the major parts of being an adult is making effective and informed financial decisions. Since financial literacy isn't really emphasized in our education system, the onus of [teaching your teens money management skills](#) falls on you.

For practical lessons on budgeting and saving cash, give your teens an allowance and let them take over something like buying their own clothes or snacks. As they grow older, let them open a [bank account](#) so they can learn how to write checks and keep track of financial records. Also, include them when making some financial decisions, e.g., choosing college scholarships or planning a vacation.

2. Healthy living

While moving from home does give young adults the freedom to eat whatever they want, whenever they want, they soon realize that they took your fully-stocked fridge for granted. Get your teens ready for the responsibility of caring for themselves by ensuring they know how to shop for produce and cook simple nutritious meals.

Healthy living isn't just about eating, so encourage them to develop healthy habits including exercising regularly, keeping a regular bedtime schedule, and developing [emotional resilience](#). It's also a good idea to initiate discussions about substance abuse and the damage that drugs and alcohol can wreak on a person's life.

3. Having a positive work ethic

Millennials have a reputation for being an entitled generation with a poor work ethic and [unrealistic expectations](#). To help your teen avoid these labels and survive in the workplace, instill a positive work ethic from an early age. Something as simple as filling out an application for a summer job or crafting their resume in readiness for an internship position can teach them invaluable skills.

Additionally, don't underestimate the [lessons chores can teach](#) your kids about work. Giving them chores teaches them to be accountable and responsible, while working with siblings teaches the value of teamwork. Setting rules and enforcing consequences instills discipline and a respect for authority. All these lessons and skills will come in handy when your teen enters the workplace.

4. Interpersonal skills

Part of being a healthy adult involves interacting and

communicating with others and building lasting relationships — or what is popularly referred to as making friends and influencing people. Unfortunately, teens nowadays conduct most of their interactions via social media and risk losing out on the intricacies of verbal and non-verbal communication.

That's why it's imperative for you to give your teens plenty of opportunities to socialize. You'll also need to give them pointers on basic etiquette as well as the art of conversing. Your kids will also need to develop strategies for [dealing with negative emotions](#) as well as conflict resolution skills.

5. Basic life survival skills

Lastly, your teen will require [basic life skills](#) in order to deal effectively with the challenges and demands of everyday adulthood. This covers a wide array of skills from knowing how to vacuum, do the laundry and simple repairs around the home to emergency preparedness like changing a tire, jumpstarting a car or using a fire extinguisher. The idea is to impart enough knowledge to allow your young adults to feel confident that they can handle themselves no matter what life throws at them.

Although raising teens can be challenging, keep reminding yourself that your kids are growing up. Changing focus from trying to make them do things your way to helping them

prepare for their transition to adulthood can help you keep things in perspective.

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