

Parents' Action Tool

Questions to ask yourself:

What's the issue or problem?

How do I feel about it?

What part of this belongs to me, and what part is my teenager's issue?

What are my range of options?

***How much of this can I control?
Should I?
What's at stake?***

***What do I need to
Teach?
Say?
Learn?***

What do I need to feel comfortable?

***Tips and Tools for Successfully
Parenting Your Teen...***

from Sue Blaney

www.ParentingTeensInfo.com



Stop and think *before* you act.

When children become teenagers, parents need to do some things differently... but it isn't always clear what, or how. This "*Parents' Action Tool*" will help guide you to slow down and consider some questions before you act. Cut the Action Tool out and put it on the refrigerator or bulletin board so you remember to ask yourself these questions:

- 1.) "**What's the issue/problem?**" An honest answer here will help you clarify what is really happening. Be objective. Consider all points of view.
- 2.) "**How do I feel about it?**" An honest look at your *feelings* may actually cause you to reevaluate your answer to number 1, above. Let your feelings guide you; this may help you uncover helpful information.
- 3.) "**What part of this belongs to me, and what part is my teenager's issue?**" As your teenagers grow they will need to take on more responsibility and learn how to do more problem-solving. Try and separate your issues from theirs.
- 4.) "**What is my range of options?**" You never have only one option. Although a "no" means just that, it doesn't mean you cannot do some compromising in other areas. When you are calm, brainstorm many options; include your teen in this exploration if it feels appropriate.
- 5.) "**How much of this can I control? Should I? What's at stake?**" Ask yourself: is the behavior that you are seeing developmentally appropriate? Is it reflective of your child's temperament? Is safety at stake? Further probing will give you additional information about your appropriate level of involvement.
- 6.) "**What do I need to teach? Say? Learn?**" If you are struggling with how to respond or handle a situation with your teenager, these questions can help you identify the best course of action.
- 7.) "**What do I need to feel comfortable?**" Sometimes parents are more uncomfortable with new situations than kids; this question recognizes that you, too, have needs that must be met as you negotiate new territory with your family.