



Connection Activities for Parents & Teens

Games with a Twist:

Build emotional intelligence skills while having fun together. This can build the bridge teens need to allow themselves to practice expressing their emotions and practicing listening to others (showing empathy & more). You can take turns in the game expressing emotions by using feeling cards or themed topic cards.

Recommended Games:

Uno
Jenga
Card Games
Clue

Cards to buy to start conversations:

Choices in a Jar (Amazon)
Feelings in a Jar (Amazon)
Ungame (Amazon)
Google Feeling List PDF (there's lots of great free ones)

Cooking Together:

Why not knock down two cans with one stone by building life skills with your teen while creating connection memories from cooking a meal together.

Tip: Let them choose the meal, go through the planning together, (the cost, the ingredients, supplies, the scheduling, to the actual cooking,). Provide them with guidance and then let them lead. This is a time to ensure you provide lots of verbal descriptive praise.

Goal Set Together:

Teach your teen to set a goal while setting up your own goals at the same time (even set some family goals). This can be a family ritual or routine with weekly check-ins. Tip: Let them set their own goals even if you feel there are better goals to be set.

You can make this activity fun by using the word “Challenges” for the week or month. You can make this more exciting and fun by setting up personal rewards for achieving goals and achieving a step towards a goal.



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Plan Mini Stay-cations

Teach your teen about the steps of planning, being a leader, problem-solving, and making more memories. Do all that and more by letting them pick and plan family outings. This can be weekly, bi-weekly or monthly.

Tip: Remember to lead, guide, and then follow. But start by asking them for ideas, followed by what steps the planning will include, allowing them to schedule, find out the price, and more.

Daily Check- Ins

Create a routine around daily check-ins: Rather than “how was your day”, ask “What were two things that went well for you today?” and “What were two things that were challenging but you were able to overcome?”

Tip: You get to share too. This can be around dinner time or bedtime. Other ways to ask: “What were two highs (highpoints) today and two lows (low points)?” You can also plug in themed questions: “I had a hard time solving a problem today. I could use some help”. Share the problem and ask for ideas for solutions. Take turns with each family member.

Go on Dates:

Build memories and connections by going on dates with your teen. Let them choose activities and plan the date. Take turns planning and picking activities. Experience trying new different things together.

Tip: Go monthly or every other month. Get their feedback and their ideas. Let them plan the activities with you.