

HOME REWARDS FOR TEENAGERS

Giving children rewards – along with your sincere and enthusiastic praise – is a great way to encourage them to behave appropriately. When using rewards, it's important to remember:

- **“Reward” doesn’t have to mean “money.”** Most kids-even teens -want, more than anything else, to spend time with their parents and to have their parents’ attention.
- **Rewards should be accompanied by specific praise.** For example “Way to go! You remembered to take out the trash.” This is better than saying “You’re doing better around here.” Keep the praise focused on the behavior of the child.



- **Don’t give a reward as a bribe.** It should be given after the child has behaved appropriately when told (or on their own) and not offered beforehand. Don’t say things like “If you take out the trash, I will buy you something.” Your child may decide your bribe is not worth it. Remember – you are trying to teach good behavior, not pay off bad behavior.

- **Keep rewards related to behavior whenever possible.** As often as you can, create a reward that supports what you want your teenager to do.
- **Don’t promise rewards you can’t deliver.** Sometimes we are desperate for good behavior from our kids, and we get ourselves trapped by rewards that we can’t afford, either in time or money. Think through you plan for rewarding good behavior and don’t promise more than you can deliver.
- **Don’t give rewards if bad behavior occurs with good behavior.** If you ask your child to take out the trash, for example, and he does, but throws the trash bags to curb and they tear open, or swears at you when doing it, don’t reward him. Sometimes parents reward bad behavior because they want to reward progress, even if the child is still misbehaving. Decide ahead of time what behavior you want and how much “less” than that you’ll accept.

Here is a list of rewards that you may want to try with your teenagers. Many of them are low or no cost and can be done anywhere. Be sure to think of your own rewards and add them to the list!



Home Reward Possibilities for Teenagers

Having dating privileges	Participating in activities with friends	Having friends over
Taking dancing or music lessons	Redecorating their own room	Skating or bowling with friends
Having a cell phone	Getting a driver's license	Participating in sports teams
Finding a part-time job	Time off from doing chores	Getting to stay out late
Having car privileges	A sibling-free day	Staying overnight with friends
Go skiing or snowboarding	Having a date during the week	Getting a chance to earn extra money
Selecting TV programs	Being the chairman at a family meeting	Going to a school dance or prom
Getting nails done	Driving the car on a family trip	Camping or fishing trip with parents
Going to camp or field trip with friends	Getting a special haircut or hair style	Going an amusement park
Being allowed to sit alone/with friends when the family eats out	Eating in a restaurant	Getting to sleep in late on the weekend
Having their own checking account	A magazine subscription	Going shopping with friends
Downloading music for phone	Computer time	Selecting something special for dinner
Going to the library	Playing a video game	Going horseback riding
Going to a concert with friends	Going to the movies with friends	Buying something