

## NORMAL BEHAVIORS OF ADOLESCENTS



- Back talk, when angry.
- Argumentative, when not angry- arguments about hair, clothes, music etc.
- Choosing what peers do or say over what parents do or say
- Mistakes or violations of school policy – non-violent
- Minor run in with the law – not serious, no felonies – for example, vandalism/graffiti
- Rudeness to parents and siblings; dismissing parents’ opinions

- Communicating with one syllable. For example: “Where are you going?” “Out”
- Changing loyalty to friends, developing new friendships
- Cutting class, being tardy for school, maybe skipping a day of school
- Experimentation with tobacco, drugs or alcohol – not chronic use
- Breaking curfew, refusing to do chores, etc.
- Needing privacy. Messy rooms, not caring for possessions.
- Excessive concern about physical appearance
- Worrying parents; testing parents’ rules and consequences
- Possibly running away, one time, to friend’s home
- Sexual experimentation, increasing in seriousness with age

## HOW NOT TO DEAL WITH THESE BEHAVIORS

- Deliver a lecture with no chance for the teen to respond
- Being a dictator “That’s how it is going to be, because I say so.”
- Starting a conversation with an accusation
- Not taking your teen’s opinion into consideration
- Yell to get your point across. If you lose your temper – and all parents do – apologize later after you’ve calmed down. You don’t have to apologize for how you feel, just for blowing up.
- Nagging – it just doesn’t work
- Criticizing. The longer you complain about your kid’s strange behavior, the longer it will last. Just express your opinion without ridiculing.
- Paying attention only to the “big” things. If you listen to the trivial, your teen will talk to you about the important things too.
- Ignoring – sometimes you have to “pick your battles.”

