



Boundaries with Teens: When to Say Yes, How to Say No

By John Townsend

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Boundaries with Teens: When to Say Yes, How to Say No By John Townsend

Teenagers! You love them to pieces ... but sometimes you feel like the pieces are falling apart. Relax! Your sanity will survive these rocky teenage years, and so will your teens?provided you set healthy boundaries that work to their benefit and yours. *Boundaries with Teens* shows you how. From bestselling author and counselor Dr. John Townsend, here is the expert insight and guidance you need to help your teens take responsibility for their actions, attitudes, and emotions and gain a deeper appreciation and respect both for you and for themselves. With wisdom and empathy, Dr. Townsend, a father of two teens himself, applies biblically based principles for the challenging task of guiding your children through the teen years. He shows you how to:

- deal with disrespectful attitudes and impossible behavior in your teen
- set healthy limits and realistic consequences
- be loving and caring while establishing rules
- determine specific strategies to deal with problems both big and small

Discover how your teenager thinks. Learn how to apply biblical principles to specific problems. *Boundaries with Teens* can help you establish wise and loving limits that make a positive difference in your adolescent, in the rest of your family, and in you.

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

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About the Author

Dr. John Townsend is a leadership consultant, psychologist, and New York Times bestselling author. He has written twenty-seven books, selling 10 million copies, including the 3 million-selling *Boundaries* series. John is founder of the Townsend Institute for Leadership and Counseling and conducts the Townsend Leadership program. He travels extensively for corporate consulting, speaking, and working with leadership families. He and his wife Barbi have two sons, and live in Newport Beach, California. One of John's favorite hobbies is playing in a band that performs in Southern California lounges and venues.

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mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other --- except for brief quotations in printed reviews, without the prior permission of the publisher. Published in association with Yates and Yates, LLP, Attorneys and Counselors, Orange, CA. Interior design by Melissa Elenbaas Printed in the United States of America 06 07 08 09 10 11 * 22 21 20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Chap ter 1 Revisit Your Own Adolescence One night when I was seventeen, I ran my parents' Ford Fairlane station wagon as fast as it would go. It gave out on me after about two miles. It just stopped, and that was it. The engine had to be rebuilt. What was I thinking? It was a station wagon! I had to call my dad at 1:00 a.m. so he could take me home. We had the car towed the next day. While the Fairlane tragedy isn't a good memory, I benefited from that experience. When one of my sons told me that he had lost a watch I had given him, I remembered how crummy I had felt when I had to call my own father and tell him what had happened to the Fairlane. That memory helped me understand how bad my son was feeling about losing his watch, so I just told him, 'Oh, well, we'll get another and try again.' If you have a pulse, you have similar stories from your adolescence. Teens do things that are irresponsible. That is the nature of adolescence. For some of us, the teen years had some minor blips, and for others of us, they were miserable. For the sake of your teen, remember your own adolescence. The more you can recollect how you felt and what you did then, the better a parent you will be. Your Teen Needs You to Have a Past Why should you unearth those days? What benefit will it bring to your adolescent? Significant ones, as we will see. Remembering can help you show your teen: Empathy and identification. It is easy to forget how difficult the teen years can be, and parents sometimes judge teens too harshly for behaving like a teenager. But your teen needs a parent who will connect with him and show him empathy, who can identify with what he is going through and who understands the struggle of adolescence. He needs to know that he is not alone in the fight. Think about how much you need someone to hear you and be there for you in your everyday struggles as an adult. What if every time you screwed up, all you heard was, 'What in the world are you doing? Are you trying to ruin your life?' Wouldn't it be easy to feel disheartened and give up? Your teen, whose brain is less developed than yours, is even less resilient in the face of criticism. Your support can soften the blows that will inevitably come your teen's way. This doesn't mean that you should tell your teen lots of stories about your own adolescence. Parents often do that, thinking it's helping, when it really ends up being more for the parent than for the teen. Instead, remember those days, give them a few stories now and then, but keep most of your memories to yourself and allow them to help you identify with your teen. I have had so many teens tell me how disconnected they feel when dad tells them all the stories of his adolescence. It's much better for you to enter their world. Nor does identifying with your teen mean you will approve of all his choices; rather, you are able to put yourself in your teen's place --- even when he is being rude, self-centered, and unreasonable. When you see a little part of yourself in your adolescent, you can give him the connection he needs to mature. Insight and wisdom. Because you have survived your own adolescence, you have access to what helped you during those turbulent years, and why. When you remember what made a difference in your life, those memories can give you insight and wisdom so that you, in turn, can provide what your teen needs. So ask yourself these three questions: 1. Who stuck with me without giving up on me? 2. What truths helped me make sense of the world? 3. What did I learn from the consequences of my actions? My Boy Scout troop leader, A. J. 'DK' DeKeyser, spent time with me during countless meetings and trips. He encouraged me to stay in Boy Scouts when I was ready to bail. And he didn't tell my parents every bad thing I did; instead, he handled each one himself. DK is one of those people whose wisdom helped me learn persistence, and my memories of him have reminded me of the kind of parent I want to be. Hope. All parents wonder if their teen will ever change, become responsible, or care about his or her life. Parents don't know their children's future. Yet, because you can remember your own adolescence, you now can understand your own life and decisions. You know that you went through tough times and made many bad decisions, but that you gradually became more connected, self-controlled, focused, and responsible. Your own years should offer you hope for your teen; you can convey that hope even when your teen is floundering. My mother raised four kids. After I had grown up, I asked her how she made it. She told me that when she was overwhelmed with us, she would go to her own mom, who had raised six kids. Her mom would always tell her the same thing: 'It's just a stage; they'll grow

out of it.' This helped my mom put up with us and help us get to the next stage, whatever it was. Try to Remember . . . Even though it's not uncommon for parents to talk about how much more challenging the world is today for teens, research statistics say otherwise. For example, between 1978 and 2002, the average age for drinking alcohol for the first time went from 16.3 years to 16.2. The age for smoking the first cigarette went up from 15.2 years of age to 16.1, and the age for smoking marijuana for the first time went from 18.4 years of age to 17.2. In 1991, 54 percent of students had had sexual intercourse. In 2003, the percentage was 46 percent. Today's parents can rest assured that many of the challenges they faced in adolescence are similar to the challenges their teens face.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Kevin Serna:

In this 21st hundred years, people become competitive in every way. By being competitive today, people have to do something to make these people survive, being in the middle of the particular crowded place and notice by surrounding. One thing that at times many people have underestimated the idea for a while is reading. Yes, by reading a reader's ability to survive increases then having chance to stand up than others is high. In your case who want to start reading a book, we give you this kind of Boundaries with Teens: When to Say Yes, How to Say No book as nice and daily reading book. Why, because this book is more than just a book.

Lupe Ware:

Now a day people that live in the era just where everything is reachable by talk with the internet and the resources included can be true or not need people to be aware of each details they get. How many people to be smart in acquiring any information nowadays? Of course the solution is reading a book. Reading through a book can help individuals out of this uncertainty. Information mainly this Boundaries with Teens: When to Say Yes, How to Say No book since this book offers you rich info and knowledge. Of course the data in this book hundred percent guarantees there is no doubt in it you know.

Andrew Comer:

Reading a reader tends to be new life style on this era globalization. With reading you can get a lot of information that could give you benefit in your life. Along with book everyone in this world can certainly share their idea. Guides can also inspire a lot of people. A lot of author can inspire all their reader with their story as well as their experience. Not only the story that share in the publications. But also they write about advantage about something that you need illustration. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your young ones, there are many kinds of book that you can get now. The authors these days always try to improve their ability in writing, they also doing some study before they write with their book. One of them is this Boundaries with Teens: When to Say Yes, How to Say No.

Jerry Bell:

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