



What Your Teen Wishes They Could Tell You

Introduction

Real Wishes from Real Teenagers

- “I want them to understand how to give me earned freedom”
- “I want them to understand the impacts of technology and social media on life at home and school”
- “I wish my parents understood the power of their words over me”
- “We listen to y’all more than you think”
- “I wish my parents and I could calmly work through conflict together”
- “Desiring to hang out with friends does not mean home isn’t fun or that you’ve failed as a parent”
- “That being a teenager is hard”

Reasons your Teen Might Hesitate to Share

- They’re immature, insecure & unsure of how you might respond

6 Things Your Teen Wishes They Could Tell You

1. “I need an example” (Judges 2:6–10, Psalm 145:4)
 - The most common indicator of a young person standing firm in their faith long after they leave the home is at least one parent who models what it looks like to know & love God.
2. “I need empathy” (being a teenager is hard)
 - Today’s teenagers are searching for identity, belonging and purpose in the most confusing & complicated culture. Really listening and seeking to understand their unique challenges without trying to problem solve goes a long way.



3. “I need encouragement” (Proverbs 12:25)
 - Encouragement strengthens and inspires. There is not a parent in the room that reflects on their teenage years and says, “I wish my parents would have encouraged me less.”
4. “I need earned freedom”
 - “Before adolescence, your role as a parent is to teach and protect. From 13 years old and on, your role is to train and release. You must have a plan for planned emancipation - slowly and strategically giving your teenage more autonomy as they mature. Be clear on freedoms, expectations, and consequences all along the way.” – An excerpt from “Feeding the Hand that Bites you” by Dr Ken Wilgus
5. “I need guardrails around social media & phone usage” (Psalm 101:3)
 - The best time to put in boundaries around phones and social media is the day you give your child a phone or access to social media. The second-best day is today!
 - Guardrails to consider:
 - The kind of content
 - The amount of time spent consuming content
 - The location of content consumption
 - The example parents set with their own consumption
6. “I need the experience of healthy conflict resolution” (Proverbs 15:1)
 - One of the greatest demonstrations of how the gospel transforms us is through how we resolve conflict. Grace, truth, forgiveness, seeking to understand more than seeking to be understood should mark how we resolve conflict in our marriage, and will carry over to how you resolve conflict with your children.

A Final Charge – Psalm 78:3–8