

Cooperation Builders A. (2) B. C. (2) D. (3):

Assertiveness Formula:

(State Feelings) I Feel _____ (Insert Feeling Word)
(Identify Problem BRIEFLY/NEUTRALLY) When _____
(Explanation-Optional) Because _____
(Make a Request) If You Would _____
(What They Get in Return) Then I Will Feel/Do _____

Answer Affirmatively:

Examples: Your teen comes in from school and asks, "Can I go to the skate park?" Better to say "Sure you can, after you finish your homework," rather than "No, of course not. You need to do your homework." Your teenage daughter has neglected her chores and asks, "Can I have a sleep over," Better to say, "You bet you can, Jessie, as soon as you've cleaned your room." Your teen asks, "Mom can you take me to get supplies for my project?" Better to say, "Sure. Just let me finish making dinner."

Be Brief or Ultra Brief (Skip the Lecture):

Examples: "The dog," "Your lunch," "The trash," "Your homework," "Your room." Or just use a gesture, point, hold up the leash, hand them the dog dish.

Choices:

Examples: "Would you like to clean your room or set the table first?" "Would you like to walk the dog now or right after dinner?" "Would you like go out Friday or Saturday?" "Would you like to help with the dishes or the vacuuming?"

Create a Helping Opportunity:

Examples: "I'd love it if you helped me clean this up," "Why don't you find some ripe tomatoes?" "I bet you could fix this," "Can you hand me the wrench," "Can you stir the noodles?"

Define the Problem:

Examples: "The light was left on," "The trash is full," "The dog needs a walk," "The towel is on the floor." Or "When the lights are left on, the bill goes up," "When cheese is left out, it goes bad," "Food in the bedroom will invite roaches," and "Dishes that don't get rinsed won't come clean."

Do It Together:

Examples: The parent suggests, "Why don't we clean your room together?" or "How about I help you with the weeding?"

Disengage and Evacuate (D & E):

Examples: The parent removes him or herself from the situation or area, where the teen is located, so long as the teen is refraining from engaging in unsafe behavior. The goal is to avoid escalation of a negative, coercive cycle or engagement in power struggles or senseless debates.