

THE ARGUMENTATIVE TEEN

We must first understand that arguments are a parent problem not a kid's problem. Here is why.

A teen argues when we the adult-parent-authority make a decision they do not like AND we leave the door open for reasoning and debate. Any teen seeing the "open door" must take it and try. (We did as kids, unless our parents did not leave the door open.)

We leave the door open by trying to convince the teen with an explanation to finally agree with our decision. We want them to say "yes, I understand why I am not allowed to _____, an agree completely with your reasoning." WILL NEVER HAPPEN---NEVER!!

Once an unpopular parental decision is handed down it will be immediately followed with "Why?" If the decision was unpopular then the reasoning will also be unpopular. As long as we try to persuade them of our reasoning, the door is open. It is fine to give a reason, but not to debate the reasoning.

Leaders must make unpopular decisions. If you are swayed by the demands of the teen then you are not a leader. If you worry your teen will not like you, which is true—for the moment and then change your decision, you are not a leader.

Teens need leaders; you can be friends when they grow up.

It is okay for them to disagree; it is not okay for them to disobey or be disrespectful. The last two carry consequences.

An excellent response to the unhappy, angry teen is "If I were your age I would be (angry/unhappy...) too.

Actions speak louder than words. Telling a teen to behave will not make it happen unless they are very much aware that consequences will follow.

Three Primary Rules of Life:

1. we are completely responsible for our own behavior—you can blame others, but few buy that idea
2. bad choices leads to bad outcomes, eventually. Sometimes it takes a while
3. good choices lessens the chances of bad outcomes