

## ADHD and Parent-Teen Conflict

### 1. Why is family conflict higher in families with ADHD?

- More problems to argue about
- Verbal impulsivity and emotional reactivity are key features of ADHD

### 2. What strategies can parents use to reduce family conflict?

- Figure out common argument triggers in your household. Can these problems be reduced or avoided?
- Practice good communication skills. Use “I-statements” and reflective listening.
- Increase positive interactions. Sneak in minutes of positive time with the teen throughout the week to offset inevitable minutes of negative time. This way the dominant interaction will be positive, rather than negative.
- Schedule regular family meetings. When everyone is calm, review how everyone is feeling and discuss issues with family members. This will help prevent problems and lead to constructive conversations that are not emotional.

### 3. What to do about siblings who are irritable with each other?

- Make sure each sibling has their own space or time to be alone. If siblings share a room, schedule alone time for each in the room.
- Plan shared activities that both siblings enjoy to increase their positive interactions (again offsetting inevitable negative interactions).

### 4. How can parents prevent their own rising stress level from exacerbating family conflict?

- Pick your battles. Not every imperfection needs to be addressed.
- Find out what activities and strategies help you reduce stress as a parent. Practice these often.
- Seek support from loved ones, friends, and professionals if you feel overwhelmed

### 5. How do you address serious behavioral issues, especially those that might lead to unsafe behaviors?

- Establish clear rules about behavior and clearly communicated consequences for breaking rules.
- Always explain why you made the rule and acknowledge that the teen is inconvenienced by the rule or loses out on something that they enjoy.
- Help the teen come up with a replacement activity for the forbidden activity.
- Always acknowledge even small attempts by the teen to follow the rule.

### 6. Does ADHD medication help with family conflict?

- Yes evidence suggests small effects of stimulant medication on family conflict.
- Most likely, this happens because it’s easier to practice self-control when receiving stimulant medication.
- Other problems that lead to arguments might also be helped by medication.
- Talk to your doctor if you think medication could be helpful for your teen.

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