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Queensland Government

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Building good habits for teenagers

Why routine and balance are important for your teen.



The habits your teenager forms during adolescence will be the habits they have for the rest of their life. Neuroscience educator Nathan Wallis explains why routine and balance are so important for your teen. His advice? Let your teen problem solve and negotiate because this is how they learn self-control and good decision-making – and a teenager who can make good decisions can be a successful adult.

Learn how stress can affect your teenager and read about why routines matter for growing teenage brains.

[Music]

Nathan: The habits that your teenager forms during adolescence will be the habits that they have for the rest of their life. So as parents, we can set up good habits and good foundations for their adult life by making sure there's routine and balance. Now a teenager might not follow that routine and balance of their own accord, so they're going to need your help. But self-control means that you can't just stand over them and get them to do it. We need them to engage their own problem-solving mind. If I say 'You will be in bed at 11' he doesn't

<https://www.sparktheirfuture.qld.edu.au/building-good-habits>

have to problem-solve. If I say 'Mate, what time do you think is a reasonable time for you to be going to bed on a school night?' And he comes back with 'Oh, 1am' and I say 'That's ridiculous – 9 o'clock' and he says '11'. That process of negotiation is actually teaching your teenager self-control. He might end up going to bed quarter of an hour; half an hour later than you originally wanted but it's worth it for this process of negotiation. A teenager that can negotiate and make good decisions, will be a successful adult.

Narrator: You can discover more on the Spark Their Future website.

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