

## Parenting Teens Just Got Easier!

### May Issue 2007 – Resolving Conflict So Everyone Wins

Parenting Teens Just Got Easier! is a free monthly eZine for parents of pre-teens and teens  
From Saso Seminars – Patt and Steve Saso

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#### FREE TeleSeminar - May 22

“3 Keys to Successful Parenting of Teens”

<http://www.sasoseminars.com/tele.html>

#### Saso High School Prep - Summer Programs

NEW - programs offered this summer to middle school students include HSPT prep course and Writing Workshop. SHSP are proven programs designed to build academic confidence for high school and beyond.

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I had a discussion recently with my colleague Jeff about disagreements and misunderstandings. We both concur that they are a part of everyday life. Yet as therapists we see how destructive these can be in a family.

It is normal for conflict to increase when children reach the teen years. Adolescents challenge the limits and are more outspoken.

Teens' behaviors and attitudes transform. Sometimes parents are not prepared for the changes. So the arguing starts and people get hurt.

Are you surprised?

Research from the Gottman Institute in Seattle, WA found that most arguments are initiated by the parents. Parents have their agenda. However, the real cause of damage to relationships is not with the frequency of arguments but rather with the approach used for resolution.

#### Two approaches that harm

Commonly, parents either demand what they want, and then try and coerce the teen into doing it. Or they are permissive and accommodating.

In the bigger picture both are destructive to the parent-child relationship.

#### Demanding approach: parent wins/teen loses

Using the demanding method the parent may win, but teens build up resentment. No one likes to be forced into doing something.

Here's what I mean.

Imagine your son comes home from school. He throws his backpack on the floor, heads straight for his room, slams the door behind him, cranks up the rap music and doesn't come out until dinner.

You go into his room. Since you are the decider, you tell him to do his homework, get off the computer and turn the music off. He resists and pretty soon there's a full blown argument. You both end up feeling horrible.

#### Accommodating approach: teen wins/parent loses

Using the same story - mom tries to talk to Johnny and he starts yelling at her to get out of his room and get off his back! She succumbs and leaves him alone. She feels hurt then angry when he doesn't come to dinner. Both are miserable.

#### Exploring unmet needs

It is important to remember that both parent and teen have needs. Our behavior is an attempt, whether consciously or not, to get those needs met.

Johnny wants privacy and control over his time, and mom wants a good student and family togetherness.

If parents are always accommodating their demands, teens will learn to be self-absorbed.

If we try to control and manipulate teens' behavior, they will learn to cope negatively in unhealthy ways...rage, resentment, retaliation.

There is a healthier way.

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#### 3 step winning-method:

1. **Start by taking the power struggle out of the equation.** Look at conflict as unmet needs and explore how everyone can get their requirements met.
2. **Rewrite your conflict philosophy to be win-win,** not win-lose. With this intention you are more likely to create a solution that is workable for both of you.
3. **Work as a team toward solutions.** Make known what you both need and want, then agree to work toward a middle ground.

#### Harmony

Mom agrees to let Johnny use his time how he wants after school and Johnny agrees to join the family for dinner. He is motivated to complete his school work because it is his decision. He feels closer to his mom because she respects his needs.

#### Results

Parents who practice resolving conflict so everyone wins note remarkable changes in their children's behavior. They see improved grades, healthier relationships, more responsibility with homework and chores, and a more positive disposition.

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To learn more helpful parenting practices turn to our packages "Raising Responsible Children" & "Parents – Are You Prepared for the Teen Years?"

<http://www.sasoseminars.com/tools.html>

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#### Product & Seminar Testimony

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I heard your lecture in Sacramento, bought your books and two CD's. I must say that there are two books that have profoundly influenced my behavior. The first is the Bible. The other one is Parenting Your Teenager with TLC.

Thank you so very much. I no longer feel I need to yell at my son to get him to do what I want him to do. My demeanor has changed such that I speak in a regular tone

of voice and come from a place of honesty and love in expressing my desires for what would be good behavior/actions on his part.

Our relationship has turned around and he is on a very positive path. I quote your books often and thank you so much for your work. You are influencing many lives. -- Nancy Yee

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#### Saso High School Prep Testimonies

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SHSP is a proven program designed to build academic confidence for high school and beyond.

<http://www.sasoseminars.com/hspt.html>

My daughter took this summer course as a rising 8<sup>th</sup> grader, and we felt that it helped her confidence and skills for the HSPT test. She will tell you without question, it was helpful.

However, the biggest difference that we saw was that her skill and confidence in just regular academics in 8<sup>th</sup> grade improved, particularly in math. -- Carrie Doolittle

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My son did great on the test! Without a doubt, your preparation class was instrumental in his performance. With so many factors considered in acceptance to private schools, it was reassuring to have the confidence that he would do well on this test, based on the preparation from your class. Thank you very much for the outstanding preparation. Please feel free to refer any parents to me who may want a recommendation from a satisfied customer. -- Elva Wilson

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