

Adolescence is the most fascinating period of our life. The energy, intelligence and zest are at the peak and this vast energy needs to be properly channelized, nurtured and guided by adults like us. If we perform our duty well, the outside world, media and 'bad' company will no longer have any negative impact on adolescent's outcome. Parenting, by definition means an art of bringing up children. It is a bilateral process where both parents and children learn from each other mostly by their mistakes. The principal aim of parenting is overall well-being of a teenager in all the dimensions of life namely physical health, mental wellbeing and social satisfaction. Parents and teachers have a lot to contribute for shaping up a teenagers overall personality in these crucial years.

#### ROLE OF ADULTS FOR ENSURING ADOLESCENT WELLBEING:

##### **Physical health**

- Balanced nutrition with plenty of water, cereals, proteins, fresh fruits and vegetables. Avoiding junk food.
- Cleanliness including education about menstrual hygiene.
- Daily exercise. Restricting media use and not eating in front of T.V./Computer.
- Minimum 8 hours sleep daily. No electronic gadgets (mobile/computer/T.V. etc.) in adolescent's bed room.
- Timely vaccination and information about newer vaccines to ensure freedom from serious diseases.

##### **Mental wellbeing**

- Realistic expectations from self and the teenager, depending on intellectual and financial capacities.
- Relaxation techniques to relieve day to day stress.
- Scientific knowledge and preparation to address age appropriate sexual concerns of adolescents.
- Exposing teenager to successful and satisfied people to help him/her choose ideal "role model".
- Developing proper study skills to save time and energy and to ease out examination burden.

##### **Social satisfaction**

- Knowledge about peer group and regular interaction with their parents.
- Regular interaction with school authorities to identify signs of risk taking behaviors, early.
- Media education to dilute the ill effects of irrational advertisements, violence and sexual stuff.
- Encouraging participation for social cause e.g. blood donation, child labor, environmental pollution etc.
- Fostering inter-personal skills by exhibiting your own communication and negotiation skills within family.

A teenager, who doesn't bring any complaints from school or society, usually does not have major problem. Parents however must remember that scholastic deterioration or loss of interest in studies may sometimes point out to very serious conditions like substance abuse, cyber addiction, pornography or sexual experimentation, anti-social behavior and even depression. Any recent worsening in school or college studies should alert the parents. Timely intervention and professional help from adolescent health personnel can save a teenager and his/her family from serious trouble.

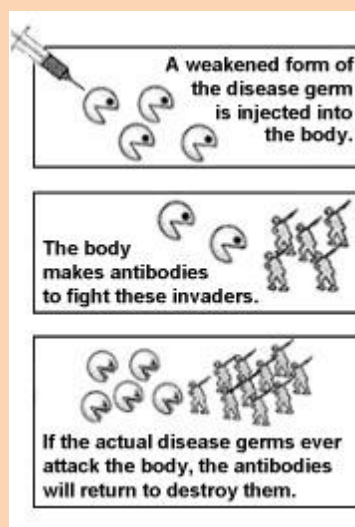
The above task is quite difficult, but not impossible. If parents stick to the following techniques consistently, unanimously and religiously; majority of adolescents who are the future of the country will have a satisfactory outcome.



The teenager will live his/her teenage only once. Let him/her make the best out of it. You, as parents will also have only one chance to help him/her to shape the future.

### Adolescent vaccination: "Bridge between strong childhood and healthy adulthood."

The principal sources of many childhood infections are adolescents and adults. Vaccination of the teenager not only protects him/her but also ensures their safe adulthood and protection of their future children. Protection offered during childhood vaccination weans off in the teenage, hence booster doses are mandatory. Some newer vaccines are specially designed for teenagers and adults and must be administered from time to time following diagram illustrates the mechanism of vaccination effect.



Like any medication, vaccines, can cause side effects. The most common side effects are mild. On the other hand, many vaccine-preventable disease symptoms can be serious, or even deadly. The side effects associated with getting vaccines are almost always mild (such as redness and swelling where the shot was given) and go away within a few days. If your child experiences a reaction at the injection site, you can use a cool, wet cloth to reduce redness, soreness, and swelling. A painkiller may be given after consulting your pediatrician. Serious side effects following vaccination, such as severe allergic reaction, are very rare and doctors and clinic staff are trained to deal with them. Pay extra attention to your teenager for a few days after vaccination. If you see something that concerns you, call your adolescent care pediatrician. Learn about diseases and the vaccines that prevent them, including the most common side effects associated with each one. **Even if your teenager has missed out some vaccines, these can very well be administered at the earliest with your pediatrician's guidance.**

#### ADOLESCENT IMMUNIZATION CHECK LIST

Vaccination of a child continues throughout teenage. Vaccination is the most effective and cheapest method for protecting our children. For remaining healthy, active and productive; each and every teenager **must** receive complete immunization as per the following schedule.

(\* indicates that vaccination is necessary only if the adolescent has not had natural infection.)

Vaccine	Disease prevented	Number of Doses
<b>Td/ TdaP</b>	Tetanus, diphtheria and whooping cough (adults and teenagers are the main source of these infections in younger children)	<b>Td – 2 doses at 10 yr, 16 yr or Tdap 1 dose at 10 yr &amp; Td 1 dose at 16 yr</b>
<b>MMR</b>	Measles, mumps and German measles (which causes serious malformations in a newborn if acquired during pregnancy.)	<b>2 doses</b>
<b>Hepatitis B</b>	Jaundice, serious liver damage and cancer	<b>3 doses</b>
<b>Typhoid</b>	Typhoid fever and its complications	<b>Once in 3 years</b>
<b>Chicken pox*</b>	Chickenpox (which is of more serious form in older children and adults)	<b>2 doses</b>
<b>Hepatitis A*</b>	Jaundice and gastroenteritis which is spread through unsafe food and water	<b>2 doses</b>
<b>Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) Vaccine</b>	Cancer of cervix (lower part of uterus) which is the commonest cancer in women all across the world including India.	<b>3 doses</b>

***“Let your love and tender care continue in their tender years.”***

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