

Middle adolescence

(14 to 16 years)

Middle adolescence is a time of increasing independence, sexual development, and self-centeredness. The adjustment through middle adolescence can be quite difficult for both parents and teens. Below are some common characteristics of middle adolescence.

- Can reach full adult size.
- More interest in dating or romantic relationships.
- Less interest in family activities.
- May spend much time, money, and energy trying to improve their appearance.
- Think others are constantly looking at and thinking about them.
- May disagree more about everyday issues.
- Often challenge limits.
- Thinking is more mature and complex.
- Can consider facts and make good decisions.
- Sensitive to criticism.
- Eats more meals away from home.

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Parent tips

- Talk with your teens about their friends. Encourage positive relationships.
- Give teenagers ideas of creative things to do with their friends.
- Set reasonable limits on how often your teens can go out with friends during the school week, while at the same time recognizing how important friends are at this stage.
- Be consistent and fair in enforcing the rules. Make sure they know the rules and negotiate meaningful consequences.
- Give encouragement and recognize positive behavior and accomplishments.
- Teach and model appropriate ways to show affection.
- Share your beliefs, concerns, and values about what's going on in their world.
- Encourage your teen to call a respected adult friend when they need some advice.
- Have healthy snacks available.
- Continue to give hugs and tell them you love them.

If you need more help with parenting teens, call TAMS at (612) 813-6125 or visit these helpful websites:

www.shouldertoshoulderminnesota.org

www.parenting.umn.edu

www.talkingwithkids.org

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