

GUIDELINES FOR TEEN DATING

Dating Standards

1. At church, no physical contact.
2. No couples in isolated areas alone (corners, auditorium, etc.).
3. No Jr. High with Sr. High.
4. No teens seated in balcony.
5. Teens sit up front unless with parents.
6. No single dating in cars, or otherwise, to or from youth activities.
7. Sr. High teens can sit together on the bus within the first three rows.
8. Couples must always stay with the group at all times.

Dating Suggestions:

1. Maintain a close balance between being too strict and being too loose. Teenagers don't need complete restriction from interacting at all with the opposite sex, but they really don't need complete freedom and license to do whatever they please.
 2. Allow them to interact, but control it carefully and closely.
 3. Talk with them openly about what is expected, tell them why, and then carefully enforce what you explain to them. You are protecting the purity of those who do not yet realize its value, in a world that is trying to destroy it. Whether or not they agree, don't give in.
 4. Start allowing some interaction in Jr. High. There is a natural change that takes place in these formative years. They will be attracted to the opposite sex. Don't try to stifle that God-given change, but deal with it wisely. Dads, maintain a close relationship with your daughters. This will help to balance their "boy craziness." Don't be threatened by these changes. Handle them in a light-hearted manner. Make fun, teasing lightheartedly about these types of things. Try also to have occasional serious talks with your teens on the subjects of relationships that please God.
 5. Always keep a group togetherness spirit, rather than allowing isolated, concentrated times of "dating." Sitting together as a family, doing things as a family, family outings and family nights should never be replaced with "isolated togetherness" with a boy or girl.
 6. Be very wary of a teenager or a couple who always want to be alone. Don't allow any time alone where strong adults are not within very close range. Idle time alone leads only to sin.
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7. Be concerned about a teen who doesn't enjoy being around the family or with a group. This reveals that there are probably impure motives.
 8. Don't allow your teen to be completely consumed with another boy or girl. Hours on the phone, talking in a corner at church, wandering from the group, lower grades, always wanting to be together are warning signs for which you need to look.
 9. As your teen grows from Jr. High to Sr. High, moving toward graduation, gradually begin helping them prepare for a life-long relationship in marriage, etc. (eg. double dates with parents, talks about having a home...always keep a very close hand of control in every relationship right up until marriage).
 10. Encourage and enforce a light "friends" type philosophy until graduation from high school, then begin encouraging the ideas of looking for a husband or wife.
 11. Be very careful of three danger areas: isolation, extended time together, and a physical and fleshly mentality. These three areas lead to problems, and two of the three are not necessary until marriage. Watching certain TV shows, movies and listening to certain types of music may fuel a fire in these areas.
 12. Be approachable about these subjects. One of the biggest mistakes that parents make in this area is that they are completely unapproachable. Your teens will go somewhere for answers, and there are those in the world who are only too eager to give them answers (wrong answers, that is).
 13. Nothing can combat the world's fleshly influence in this area better than a strong relationship with Mom and Dad. Be close to your teen. A lifestyle of neglect and apathy leads to broken hearts and homes.
 14. Don't ever allow time alone in an unsupervised setting. This would include being at home with a boy or girl when no one else is home, early morning or late night time alone, single dating, or being alone anywhere without adult supervision.
 15. Junior highers need to have a lot of friends.
 16. Don't ever push your teen into a relationship.
 17. Don't take it too lightly when your teen loses a boyfriend or a girlfriend. This is one of the most traumatic experiences a teenager faces. Help them through this time. Expect them to take it harshly.
 18. Don't panic just because your teen notices a boy or girl. After all, you did, too, when you were their age. It's a normal, God-given occurrence that needs to be
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carefully controlled by God-given parental authority--just as long as you don't give them the same freedom that your parents gave you.

19. Parents cannot have too much concern or too much caution, but you can have too much restriction, which, in turn, breeds rebellion. Have a heart for your teen's feelings, help regulate and manage them. On the other hand, if there is no fire burning, don't bring out the matches and firewood.
 20. Set the standard for your home, enforce the standard with determination, draw the line and don't allow it to be crossed. At the same time, love your teen, understand, and build a relationship with them that communicates complete acceptance. They will respect and honor this approach for years to come. On the other hand, rules without relationships breed rebellion.
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