

FOURTEEN TO NINETEEN YEARS (PARENT)

- In early and middle adolescence, 14 to 17 years, puberty is well underway, and complete in many individuals.
- Generally there is a decreased pre-occupation with the body and an increased intense involvement with peers.
- Conflicts with parents over the issue of independence are common at this time. The peer group often sets the behavioral standards.
- It is often a time of sexual exploration and experimentation.
- In late adolescence, 18 to 20 years, emancipation is nearly complete, and there is an increased concern about a career choice.
- Social skills become enhanced and intimate relationships of a physical and emotional nature occur.
- Body image and gender role definition are nearly completed.
- As the teen progresses from middle to late adolescence, it is important for you to allow the adolescent to make age-appropriate decisions and gradually promote independence and self-responsibility.
- You should learn to respect your teen's privacy. At the same time, it is important for you to spend time with your teen.
- Although periods of estrangement in parent-adolescent relationships are to be expected, you need to maintain comfortable communication with your adolescent. You should continue to take an interest in school and extracurricular activities and attend events in which your child participates. You should continue to praise achievements, especially educational activities as the adolescent approaches graduation. You need to help your teen plan for college, vocational training or work.
- You should show and express affection appropriately. At the same time, you need to continue to establish fair rules and consequences. You should assign and expect teens to follow through on home chores. You should counsel you teen about sexual activity, use of illicit drugs, alcohol or tobacco, and driving responsibly.
- At all times, you should know where your teen is, what they are doing, whom they are with and when they are expected home.
- As always, you need to take seriously your function as a role model and set reasonable standards.

Confidential Medical Care:

- It is good to stay close to your child. It is also important for you to allow them some time alone to talk about their health and changes in their bodies and lives. This will help your teenager make good decisions. As your teen's doctor, I encourage teenagers to share information about their health with their parents or guardians.
- However, there will be some things that your teenager would rather talk about with a doctor, nurse, or counselor.
- Massachusetts law allows teenagers to receive some health care services on their own. Health care providers have to keep those services CONFIDENTIAL. "Confidential" means I will only share this information if a teenager says it's all right.
- I will also share this information if someone is in danger.
- I can contact you about most of the services your child receives. However, if your teenager receives the following services, I cannot give you information about these visits without permission from your son or daughter:
 - The prevention or treatment of pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and other contagious diseases
 - The diagnosis and treatment of sexual and physical abuse
 - Care and counseling for drug or alcohol problems
- I ask that you support these rules and help your teen learn to care for his or her own health needs. I look forward to providing ongoing medical care for your child. I will be happy to talk to you about the questions or concerns you may have and your child's health.