

## TIP SHEET FOR RELATIVES AS PARENTS

### RAISING TWEENS AND TEENS PART I

Did your angel wake up one day and become a diva? Is your mild mannered child suddenly challenging everything you say? Welcome to the Tween and Teen years.

Stay open to talking to your child about the many new experiences they are having. Try to remember how confusing the world was when you were their age. Kids may act like they know everything, but they are struggling! Let's think about what might be going on for today's Tween or Young Teen:

- Their hormones are starting to flow and they are having physical changes in their bodies.
- They may feel stuck between being a little kid and not yet a young adult.
- Their brains are still growing and the part of the brain that controls impulses is not completely formed yet.
- They want to be more independent from adults and make their own decisions.
- They are learning how to deal with having more responsibility and freedom.
- Peers are a major influence in their lives and the peer pressure can be tough.
- They are experiencing their first crushes and perhaps questioning their sexual orientation.
- They want to understand all of the social relationships that are going on around them, and wonder where they belong among the social groups.
- School work is more difficult. They may have multiple teachers. They may be expected to manage long term projects.
- They want to know how to make friends, and worry if people will still be their friends if they disagree.
- People may be offering them drugs, alcohol and cigarettes.
- They may experience more sexual talk, pictures and pressures.
- They are instantly messaging or texting friends who are almost always available.
- They may send out information or pictures to one friend and then regret it later when everyone knows.

The list above reflects experiences common among all kids. There are extra stresses for children living with grandfamilies:

- They have experienced trauma and/or a major loss in their lives.
- They have to explain to peers that they are not living with their mom or dad.
- They may feel that they are different from all of their classmates

In August, our newsletter will have **Part II: How to Talk to Your Tween or Teens.**

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