



KRS TRAINING  
AND DEVELOPMENT

# 3

## Simple Steps

### To Communicate with Your Teen Daughter

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# 1 PREPARE YOUR TEENS FOR ADULTHOOD



So often, parents tell their teens about how life will change once they become 18. We tell them about all the responsibilities they will have and why they need to get themselves together because "the real world" will not coddle them.

Most of the parents who say this, have never taken the time to actually prepare their kids for the world they are describing. We use it as a punishment or 'I got cha' instead of helping them prepare to navigate said world. So they move into adult life afraid they will be alone. Of course this will make them stick closer to their friends and significant others. Of course they will have attitudes with us! This is their form of self care and self defense.

Every teenager must learn the ability to solve problems, handle difficult situations, make important decisions in life, learn composure, and all other moral norms from home. But let's not forget they also need to know how to fill out applications for jobs and apartments, call utility companies, budget their income and retain employment.

If you want to have open communication with your daughter, start by letting her know you will be preparing her for adulthood and what you plan to teach her (I will be having a series of workshops on this specifically for teens to help you out soon...stay tuned). This will give her such a sense of pride and take her through the 3 stages of: **dependence, inter-dependence and independence.**

As parents and guardians, we are the key custodians of this responsibility.



# 2 STOP BEING NONCHALANT



Many parents give up on their children after several failed attempts to get them to communicate. We tend to feel they don't want to be bothered or they don't care. So we act as though we don't care in return to help us manage our emotional vulnerability. May I be honest? That just feeds into their emotional insecurities. They already feel they can't say "certain things" to you, no matter how open you have always been with them.

In order to change that narrative, I suggest getting a spiral notebook with lined pages. Tell your daughter that she is allowed to write ANYTHING she wants you to know about or anything she wants to get off her chest. Let her know the notebook is a judgement free zone and you will write your **calm** response in it and you two never have to speak or write about it again unless she wants to. Sometimes, your response to her entries may simply be "received". If she shares something you want more information on, simply write "may I ask (pick a number between 1 and 5) questions so I may get clarity around this situation?" Allow her to say yes or no based on her comfort level.

The key here is to **NEVER** break her trust by trying to push conversations that she doesn't want to have. It is hard enough sharing information. Do not take away the safety in her doing so.

# 3 SET ESSENTIAL PRIORITIES



Too much work with no play makes Jill miserable. Likewise, too much play and no work will make Jill a lazy person.

Teenagers have lots of energy and, in most cases, will want to channel that energy into pleasurable things. That does not mean we should not hold them accountable to the things we know they need to do in order to be self sufficient people who make integrity based decisions.

Let me share two of our family values with you:

1. Freedom without responsibility leads to entitlement. - This means that if you want the freedom to do what you want with your free time, you much also take the responsibility of doing what is required of you. In this case, the responsibilities in our household are school, homework, housework, family commitments and 4 humanitarian efforts per year.

2. Do what you gotta do, then you can do what you wanna do. - This means whatever you want to do, must be done **after** your responsibilities have been completed.

It is not always easy for teens to stick to the rules. As a mom, I don't even always want to enforce them. However, making **sure** we are all our best selves as often as possible is my goal and I make sure to communicate that often.