

## **Seven Habits of Highly Relentless Parents**

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([www.focus.org](http://www.focus.org))

Here are seven practical ways parents can demonstrate relentlessness so they never quit on mentoring their teenager:

1. **Pray, Pray, Pray**

The number-one strategy for guiding your child through the teen years is to surround him with prayer. Moms and dads of teenagers should heed Paul's admonition to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). This means consistently, throughout the day, asking God to protect, guide and direct your teen. Ask the Lord to give you strength, wisdom and courage as you parent your adolescent.

2. **Choose to Be Active and Involved**

Your love and commitment to your teenager should be active and obvious. Be involved in your teen's life whenever and however you can. Ask questions about her day. Play racquetball with him on the weekends. Go out to breakfast together. Be there for all the important events- and even the seemingly unimportant ones. Choosing to be involved in your child's life also means taking a keen interest in his spiritual life. Provide every opportunity for your teenager's faith to grow and flourish. More importantly, present a model of spiritual maturity and passion by living out Christlike love, humility and servanthood.

3. **Don't Take No for an Answer**

Of course you should respect your teen's boundaries, but some teenagers say "I don't want to talk about it" or "It's no big deal" because they're not sure their parents are really interested. Be persistent without being pushy. Assure your teen that you are genuinely interested in, and concerned about, her life and that you're always available to listen.

4. **Emulate Our Heavenly Father's Steadfast Love**

God's love for each of His children is unchanging, enduring and unwavering, regardless of how badly we blow it. Throughout the Old and New Testament, God declared and demonstrated His unyielding love for His chosen people, even when they were rebellious and contemptuous toward Him. Let this kind of faithfulness be your model as you express and demonstrate love for your teen. Say to your child often, "There's nothing you could do that would make me stop loving you."

5. **Renew Your Mercies Every Day**

Christians are fond of quoting the verse "Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed....They are new every morning" (Lamentations 3:22-23). The promise here is that God's mercy toward us is ongoing, continual, daily. As we savor the reassurance offered by this verse, let us also extend this same sort of mercy to our teenage sons and daughters. Every morning should be a clean slate, a chance to start anew. If last night's argument was talked out and resolved, leave it behind. If your daughter apologized for the lie she told last week, believe that she's going to tell the truth today and tomorrow.

6. **Nurture Yourself as You Nurture Your Teen**

Parents who are chronically depleted and drained of energy can offer little to their teenager. Therefore, it's vital that you guard your spiritual, emotional and physical health.

Do whatever you must to recharge your batteries: get plenty of rest, set aside time for fun, exercise regularly, pray and meditate on God's Word.

7. **Resolve to Never, Ever Give Up**

Go the distance, never surrender, stick it out, finish the race, hang in there, be steadfast to the end — whatever terminology you prefer, decide now that you'll always, always be there for your teenager. No matter how angry, stressed out, frustrated, disappointed or exhausted you are, resolve to be the best mom or dad you can be. Whether you are preparing for your child's teen years or are presently in the midst of them, make a commitment — an act of your will — to never give up on your son or daughter.