

## Prevention Strategies for Parents—Part 7



### FREE LIFE-CHANGING ONLINE PARENTING COURSES

In these video-based, interactive classes—available 24/7—you'll learn a consistent, encouraging style of parenting that will benefit you and your children for a lifetime. With this self-study course, you have the option of when to participate based on your own schedule and at your convenience. Gain additional insight from your online group leaders as they provide support and feedback.

Choose from four available courses:

- **Active Parenting: First Five Years:**  
For parents of children from birth to age 5
- **Active Parenting 4th ED:**  
For parents of children ages 5 to 12
- **Active Parenting of Teens:**  
For parents of preteens and teens
- **Crossroads of Parenting & Divorce:**  
For divorced and divorcing parents

Continue your experience as an “active” parent by reviewing what you learn in the class in your accompanying parent guide. Each guide contains additional information, activities, and worksheets to help you practice what you learn.

Visit [ACFCcares.com](https://www.acfc.org/parents/active-parenting) for more information and to start your Active Parenting journey today.

If you have participated in the Active Parenting of Teens Online Class, or viewed the videos in the Online Video Library, you are familiar with the five goals of behavior that govern much of your teen’s behavior. These five goals are belonging, power, protection, withdrawal, and challenge. How your teen acts and reacts to their environment can be geared towards one of these five goals and what steps they take to reach these goals. Recognizing when your teen is using one of these goals can be a powerful tool for parents to understand why their teen acts a certain way. And we all know what a challenge that can be! Challenge is a goal that emerges in the teen years. The need to be challenged is a powerful drive and yet many teens do not get enough opportunities to do so in positive ways. For too many teens, life is boring. They resort to challenging themselves through the negative approach of *thrill seeking* just to feel a rush of adrenaline and a sense of adventure. Drugs, sex, and violence offer easy, but dangerous ways to accomplish this goal.

How can parents help? First, start working with your community leaders to make challenging activities available to all teens in your area. In the meantime, help your own teen to take advantage of activities that are already available. If it’s a physical challenge your teen wants, look for adrenaline-pumping activities like rock-climbing, mountain biking or white-water rafting. Help your teen get involved with scouting or outdoor adventure programs, like Outward Bound. Organized sports offer excellent opportunities for healthy challenge, as well. School leagues, recreation department leagues and youth groups such as the YMCA and Boys and Girls Clubs, offer plenty of opportunities for girls and boys to get physical in healthy ways. Participating in athletics and being a part of a team are also excellent ways for teens to develop their leadership and team-building skills.

In addition to physical challenges, you can also encourage your teen to pursue challenges of a more intellectual kind: hobbies and other interests in which they challenge themselves to develop skills and knowledge. Possibilities include debate groups, chess clubs, working on the school newspaper, skill-building jobs, junior business clubs, community service work, dance groups and playing a musical instrument. If your teen can find an interest that challenges them to stick with it and do their best, their confidence will grow and they will satisfy their desire for excitement in positive ways. This is also a good opportunity for your teen to find a peer group that shares the same interests, where they can feel accepted and appreciated. This is very important to teens.

To learn more about effective parenting skills, visit the Active Parenting Online Video Library. These helpful videos are offered free of charge by the ACFC in partnership with Active Parenting. Guidance and help are available for parents of children of all ages. To access the Online Video Library, go to the [ACFC website](https://www.acfc.org/parents/active-parenting), click on the Active Parenting tab, and follow the instructions on how to view the videos.