

## *10 Concrete Steps for Working with Adolescents*

### **The next time you are tempted to:**

Yell at your child

Blame your child

Make fun of your child

Be sarcastic with your child

Give up on your child

*What you do defines you as a parent. You can react on your feelings or you can try this ten step plan.*

1. **Stop.** Or at least slow down.
2. **Think.** Take a few seconds to think about what you are feeling. Don't react.
3. **Don't take it personally.** It's not about you! Don't take what your child says and does personally.
4. **Don't call them names.** Don't pile on negative reinforcements. Sarcasm and name-calling doesn't work. They should never hear this from a parent.
5. **Don't blame the child.**
6. **Don't expect them to immediately trust you.** Show them that you care-again and again and again. It takes over a year of your consistent positive role modeling to instill trust and confidence.
7. **Give them encouragement and positive reinforcement.** Tell them they are brilliant, creative and imaginative. Help them to believe in themselves again.
8. **Don't tell them their problem is not a big deal.** If a child talks to you, it's important. Validate their feelings.
9. **Help your children know themselves.** Ask questions, show interest. Help them discover what causes their feelings of sadness, anger and frustration that affect their behavior.
10. **Never give up.** If you have to, go back to Step 1, but never give up.