

Summary: 1:1 Time

1:1 Time

It is important to boost your parent-teen relationship before changing difficult behaviors. One way of boosting parent-teen connection is to create a daily, short-but-sweet, quality time routine with your teen. Although you are already spending time with your teen, this quality time is different because:

1. It is a short amount of time when your teen has your TOTAL attention
2. Your teen chooses and leads the activity

Why is 1:1 Time especially important for teens with ADHD and regulation challenges?

Teens with ADHD and behavioral/emotional regulation challenges are more likely to get corrections and negative reactions from people in their world, like teachers, coaches, and even parents. This makes it even more important to seek out opportunities for positive interactions.

Creating 1:1 Time

You can create the powerful effects of 1:1 Time by:

1. Letting your teen choose the activity. Try to avoid the teaching and correcting parent modes - 1:1 Time is focused on bonding!
2. Focusing 100% of your attention on your teen. Make it easy on yourself by scheduling 1:1 Time when you have few interruptions and distractions
3. Showing enthusiasm! Showing enthusiasm for your teen and their actions will help make 1:1 Time quality time together. Here are two tips for showing enthusiasm:
 - Describe what your teen is doing. For example: "Wow, look at all the different colors in your artwork!"
 - Make comments on positive qualities: "I love how creative you've gotten with your videos. You crack me up!"

1:1 Time Tips

It can be hard to find time every day for 1:1 Time. The good news is that even 10 minutes a day can be powerful for strengthening your relationship. If you're not able to do 10 minutes right now, try 5 minutes for a week and work your way up.

Planning 1:1 Time will make it more likely to happen. When are you most likely to have time and energy for 1:1 Time? It is most helpful to do 1:1 Time regularly (every day if possible, at least 3-4 times per week).

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1:1 Time Tips, continued

Teens may initially be resistant to 1:1 Time. They may prefer to hang out with friends; know this is normal and expected. Get creative, 1:1 time can be talking in the car on the way to school or sports. Don't try to compete with screens! Schedule 1:1 time when you are away from screens. For example, it could be after school or after dinner clean-up.

If your teen refuses, you can respect their decision while showing your commitment. "That's okay, I'm here to listen when you're ready," or "I'll keep saving this time for us to have some 1:1 time, maybe tomorrow!" Your consistent attempts communicate your desire to connect.

It can be hard to come up with 1:1 Time activities on the spot. Help yourself out by creating a menu of choices to keep on hand. Here are some ideas other parents have found helpful:

- Shoot hoops or practice a sport
- Let them teach you how to play a game
- Create an online shopping "wish list"
- Help cook/bake something for their friends
- Arts or crafts (drawing, making cards, knitting/sewing)
- Let them share their favorite music with you
- Make playlists for upcoming events
- Take or edit pictures
- Do face masks or beauty/spa activities
- Let them show you a favorite online fandom
- Have tea or hot chocolate
- Go for a walk
- Play with a pet
- Hear them play an instrument
- Work on a jigsaw puzzle
- Play a card game

Weekly Goal

Complete 10 minutes of 1:1 Time daily