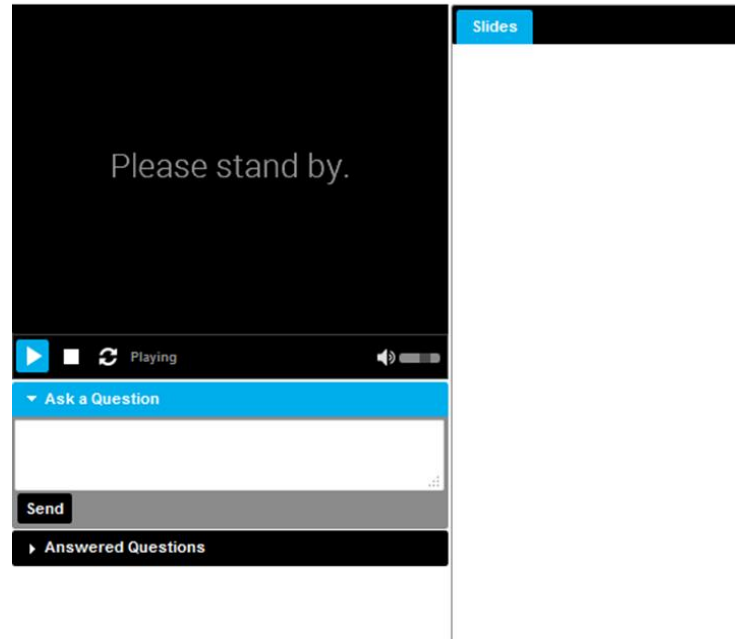


Ask the Expert

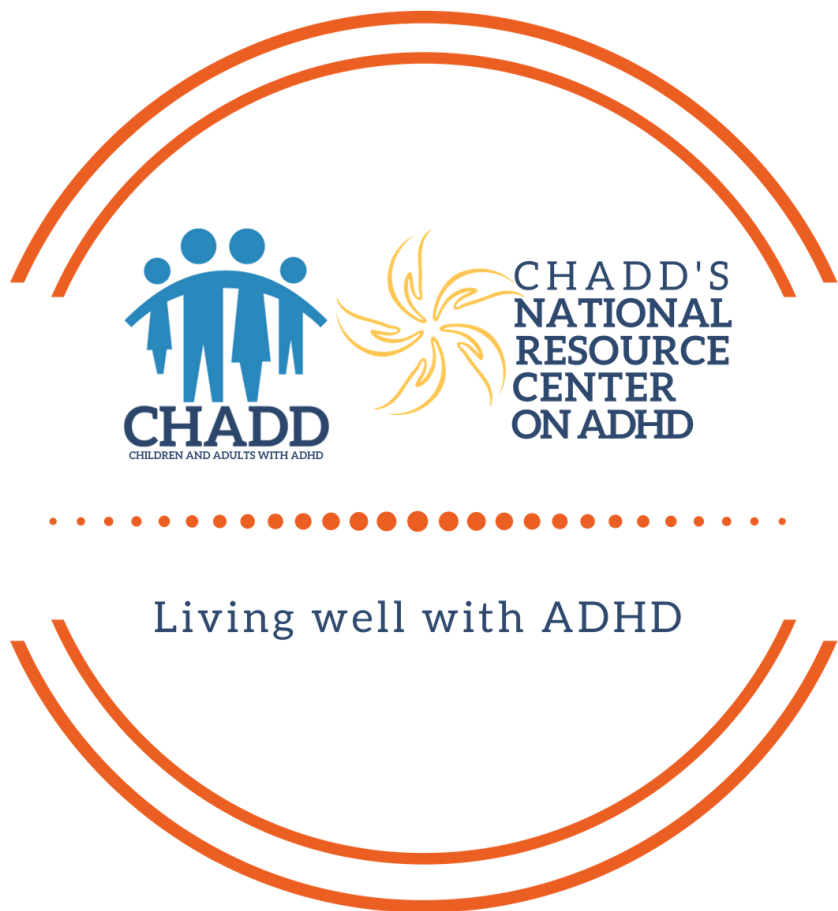
Teens & Adults: Understanding Strategies to Reduce Conflict

A partnership between CHADD and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



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Resources, Information & Support

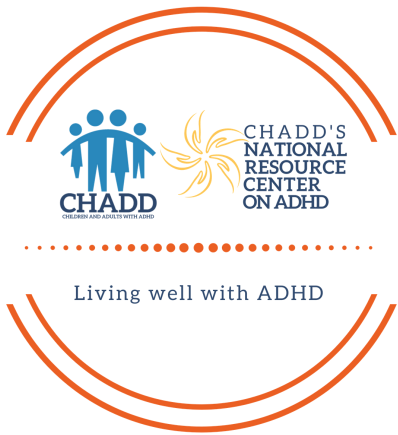
Monday– Friday, 1-5 pm Eastern

866-200-8098

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chadd.org/nrc





Ask the Expert



Rosanna Breaux, PhD, LCP

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Teens and parents: Understanding strategies to reduce conflict

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Assistant Professor of Psychology
Assistant Director, Child Study Center
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Why conflict increases during adolescence

- **Separation** - pulling away from parents and family to create an independent social group, typically consisting solely of friends
 - **Conflict Results From** – reduced involvement in the family, increased (sometimes risky) peer activities, disagreement on how much personal info parents should have



Why conflict increases during adolescence

- **Differentiation** – experiment with different interests and images to determine the type of person they want to be
 - **Conflict Results From** – identities that do not align with who the parent wants their teen to become



Why conflict increases during adolescence

- **Opposition** – challenging parent authority to become more self-determined
 - **Conflict Results From** – teens do not follow or take too long to follow parent requests and rules



Why conflict is especially high in families of teens with ADHD

- Difficulties with Executive Functions
 - Difficulties paying attention
 - Trouble organizing, planning, and prioritizing
 - Difficulty starting tasks
 - Problems managing time
 - Poor self-monitoring abilities



Why conflict is especially high in families of teens with ADHD



- Difficulties with Emotion Regulation
 - Low frustration tolerance
 - Impatient
 - Quick to anger
 - More impulsive reactions
 - More extreme reactions

Why conflict is especially high in families of teens with ADHD

- Motivational Deficits
 - Experiences with negative feedback from peers, teachers, and parents
 - Aversion to boring or difficult tasks



Why conflict is especially high in families of teens with ADHD



- Increased Risky Behaviors
 - Alcohol Use
 - Substance Use
 - Risky Sex
 - Poor Decision Making

Strategies to Reduce Conflict

General strategies to reduce conflict with teens

- Acknowledge and appreciate steps in the right direction, not just the final outcomes
 - Focus on and compliment effort
 - Provide 3 positives for every 1 negative
- Pick your battles – Ignore the small stuff!
- Provide opportunities for your teen to have choices and control when possible



General strategies to reduce conflict with teens

- Be firm and calm – volume does not increase your teen's likelihood of listening
- Avoid being “unfair”
 - Provide consistent expectations
 - Consequences should fit the (mis)behavior
 - Once a privilege has been earned it can't be taken away



Avoid Power Struggles During Conflict

- Conflict arises from two different sets of thoughts and emotions about the same issue
- Try to understand your teen's emotions and thoughts
- Work on problem solving and compromising to address the situation



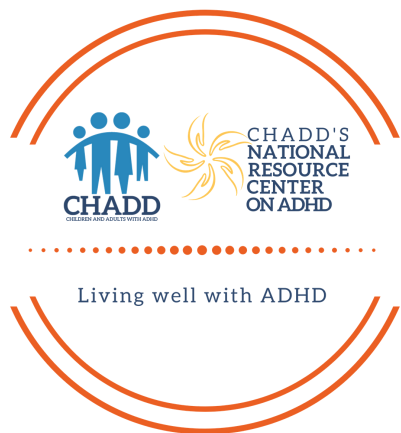
Avoid Power Struggles During Conflict

- Before trying to address and problem-solve a conflict, calm down using a coping skill
- Let your teen explain their perspectives
 - Encourage assertive but not aggressive communication
- Explain your perspective calmly
 - It's okay to admit if you made a mistake or overreacted
- Collaboratively identify possible solutions to address the conflict
 - Choose one that both parties can agree on and try it out
 - Evaluate what worked and what should be modified to prevent future conflict

Want to learn more?

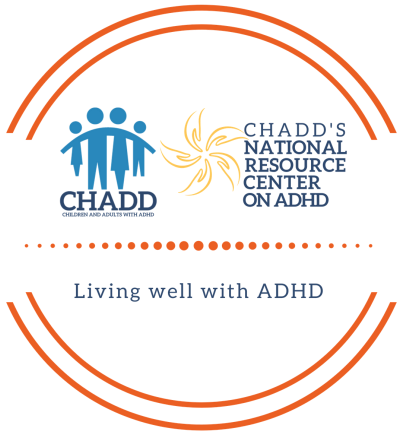
Check out these resources!

- Da Camara, G. (2020). *What Lies Beneath Matters: A workbook for Tweens and Teens with ADHD*: Achievers World.
- Honos-Webb, L. (2010). *The ADHD Workbook for Teens: Activities to Help You Gain Motivation and Confidence*: Instant Help Books, A Division of New Harbinger Publications, Inc.
- Price, A. (2017). *He's Not Lazy: Empowering Your Son to Believe in Himself*: Sterling Publishing Co, Inc.
- RELAX Intervention Handouts - <https://www.calmerlab.com/the-relax-intervention>
- Van Dijk, S. (2011). *Don't Let Your Emotions Run Your Life for Teens: Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills for Helping You Manage Mood Swings, Control Angry Outbursts, and Get Along with Others*: Instant Help Books, A Division of New Harbinger Publications, Inc.



THANK
YOU!

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