



CENTER FOR PARENT & TEEN
COMMUNICATION

Curiosity & Intellectual Humility

4 Tips for Parents

#1

The teen years offer an opportunity for parents to nurture curiosity. Teens tend to focus on and remember things they are curious about. Curiosity encourages a growth mindset.

- A **growth mindset** is an idea that a person controls their mind and can improve their intelligence, other abilities, and learn from mistakes.
- Curiosity fosters a growth mindset that allows them to be more **active and engaged learners**.
- Curiosity encourages **excitement of the unknown** instead of fear and opens the door to possibility.

#2

Curiosity and wanting to learn about unfamiliar things give people an opportunity to make discoveries and experience joy. Parents can encourage curiosity by modeling and celebrating it.

- When children ask questions and receive answers that **prompt new ideas**, they are likely to continue asking questions.
- The questions children ask are dependent on how their questions are answered. If given a **thought-provoking answer**, they will ask deeper and more specific questions.
- Parents can **model curiosity** by looking up information about questions they don't know how to answer.
- Model curiosity by asking open-ended questions that start with "how," "why," or "what." **Explore new topics**, search for answers, and don't be afraid to say, "I don't know, let's find out together!"



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#3

Intellectual humility helps people be less judgmental, better leaders, and more effective learners. Parents can encourage intellectual humility in their children by modeling and enabling it.

- An acknowledgment of not knowing or understanding something allows the **potential for growth and learning**.
- A willingness to change one's mind in response to new information is an **essential skill to model**.
- Listening to and **appreciating other people's insights** and opinions is a powerful tool for building understanding. Even when disagreeing, listening can make a person better think through their ideas and be more willing to hear other views.

#4

The willingness to own up to one's intellectual shortcomings is critical for one to thrive and learn in their personal and professional life.

- By **being open to change** and accepting that one's beliefs may not always be correct, we learn from others and grow as individuals.
- We can learn a lot about others' lived experiences by **approaching them with intellectual humility**, rather than making assumptions about who they are or what they believe.
- People who lack intellectual curiosity tend to be rigid thinkers and disregard others' opinions. This closed-mindedness can cause a rift in relationships with peers, family, and coworkers.