

## Encouragement

I want to encourage you to begin something new in your relationship with your teenager. Shake off the staleness of the same ole' day-in and day-out and start fresh! A great way to do that is to find a hobby that you can share with your teen. Something you both can become passionate about!

That means asking your teenager their opinion on this. What do they like, what do you like, what are their interests, and what are yours? Write them all down, and then find a common thread that you can work with.

There is something powerful in watching a son and his dad play golf together, or a mom and her daughter go hiking together, or a parent and their teen reading the same book while they share coffee at a coffee shop together.

God has given us a very valuable gift called time. Psalms 31:15 says, "My times are in Your hand...". I know that time is hard to come by with all of the commitments that we have. Maybe that is why spending time with our teen is so important.

Jesus gave value to his disciples and followers by just spending time with them. He listened to their thoughts and knew what they loved. He cared about how they felt and what they knew.

Finding a hobby is not just about finding something fun that you and your teen can enjoy together. It is about...

1. Getting to know this amazing individual that is growing into an adult, that one day will be your friend.
2. Allowing them to get to know you as an individual with tastes and dreams and wishes.
3. Giving them a safe place to put this crazy world aside for a few hours.
4. Telling them that you love them through actions because we all know that our words don't always make it past the cell phone they happen to be texting on.
5. Encouraging them to learn what they love and can be passionate about no matter the labels they may wear at school or even home.
6. Teaching them about God's creative side through all the things He has put in this world for us to enjoy!

And we thought hobbies were just something to take up our free time. Hobbies can actually be the memories that we make with our teens that they will always remember!

Source: [ministrytoparents.com](http://ministrytoparents.com)

## Hobbies



## The Importance of Hobbies

Are hobbies really that important in the life of our teen? I would answer that with a resounding “YES!” Our teens lives are filled with expectations and demands that can sap the very life out of them. Hobbies can be a release for all of that tension and stress. It’s not often that our teenagers can find a place or a space or an activity that they can feel completely at ease without thought as to what others may think. A hobby can be that for them. The dictionary defines a hobby as an activity or interest pursued for pleasure or relaxation. That is truly hard to find in this phase of their lives.

Hobbies help teens determine what they like, and not what someone or society tells them to like. It can reveal aspects of our teen that they had no idea was a part of them. They may be an introvert and realize that they love rock climbing. Or they may be an extroverted athlete who finds that they love to just sit and paint!

Hobbies can even keep them out of trouble. I knew a family that had four amazing teenage boys. Those boys loved God and were very family oriented. All four were Eagle Scouts, top of their class, and just really nice kids. I asked their father what his secret was to raising such amazing kids. He looked at me and said, “I keep them very busy!” Now I know there is a lot of discussion surrounding overbooking our kids. I agree that we can lose focus and throw our kids into way too many commitments. His kids were truly busy.

The four boys owned a lawn service themselves, played soccer, baseball, and basketball, were very plugged in to their youth group, and often volunteered for community service. But there was one ingredient that was a part of their life that, I believe, made the difference. Their parents were always with them. I never saw them play in a game where their dad wasn’t there with his trusty video camera. Their parents shared their hobby instead of just “keeping them busy to stay out of trouble.”

If hobbies are so good for our teens, how much better would it be for them if we could find a hobby that we, as parents, could share with them? What would be the value in that?

## Shared Hobbies

Sharing a hobby with your teen could open up a whole new way of communicating with them. You could speak the same language at least in this one area.

It would show them that you value them by showing interest in something they are interested in. They would see you as a person, and not as a parent.

But it is very important to understand that a shared hobby is not something that is just your idea. Ask your teen what they think about it, and ask them to give you some ideas. Whether it’s hiking, or biking, playing golf, or painting, your hobby has to be something that you both enjoy. It can’t be about you setting an agenda and then expecting your teenager to like it. And it’s also not about you finding what they like and forcing yourself to do it. If you hate video games and they love it, maybe you could compromise and play paintball. If you love bike riding and they don’t care for it, try hiking. If you both love to read, create your own book club and then once a month go out to dinner and discuss the book you read.

Whether your teen is just like you, or completely opposite, hobbies are a good way to find common ground through something that you can both be passionate about.

Please know that it’s not the hobby itself that is so important here. It is all about the time you are willing to spend with your teen doing something that you both can enjoy. This is an investment that you will make in your teenager that can be a game changer in your relationship. This is a gift that God has given you to enrich your relationship, not make it harder. But we have to be intentional and on purpose. Otherwise, we will all just stay busy and overcommitted and miss some of the best opportunities to truly connect with our teen.