

Do you remember Charlie Brown's teacher or grandmother or whatever adult happened to be on the other end of that telephone line with him? The only conversation we ever heard Charlie Brown have with them was punctuated with "Wah, wah, wah, wah, wah, wah..." as the adult's response to him. Do you feel that it is also all your teenager hears when you speak?

Let me ask you a question you may have never considered. Do our teenagers think that is all we hear when they try to talk to us? Hmm. Hadn't thought of that? Here is a great test to see if that is true. After your teen talks, do you start your part with the phrase, "Yes, but...."? If so, that means you probably haven't listened. You have spent the time that they were talking formulating a response, or an answer, or even a brilliant idea that they just have to hear since it is coming from parental wisdom!

You probably have many of the answers to so many of your teen's questions and problems. You have experience and age on your side! But sometimes the best lessons your teen will ever learn, and the lessons that stick the hardest, are the ones that they learn themselves. Without the correct answer, but with the listening ear of their biggest fan. You!

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

# Listening



## Listening to Your Teen

I don't know why it rocks my socks when scripture just, straight up, says how we are to parent very specifically. Proverbs 18:13 says,

*“The one who gives an answer before he listens - this is foolishness and disgrace for him.”*

We are talking about really listening!

Listen when your teen yells!

Listen when they laugh!

Listen when they say things that seem to have no importance whatsoever!

Listen when they are silent. Sometimes you will hear the most at these times!

Our teens are tired of being lumped all together as individuals who are all rebellious, and smart alecks, and hard to get along with. They are mostly tired of being treated like children.

Is that why we have such a hard time listening to our teenager? Do we still see that first grader who needed us, or the third grader who didn't want to go on the field trip without us, or that fifth grader who still wanted us to tuck them in and pray with them at night?

You have done a great job of training up your teenager in the ways of God. You are not quite done, though. This step is just as important as all the others. By listening to them, you are teaching them how to listen to Him. Trust that God has allowed you to plant many truths deep inside that precious teen. The only way to know is to truly listen, even if that means you give no answer!

They just want us to listen. Really listen. Not so that we can give them an answer, but listen to what they say and nothing more. They don't necessarily want an answer, unless they ask for one. They want to know that no matter what they need to say, we, as parents, will listen without trying to come up with a lecture, a solution or a wise answer.

## Missed Opportunities

Right now you are saying as I did, “But I do listen first before I speak!” Let me ask you this. Do you listen without formulating a response in your head? That is what this verse is speaking about. Often, before our teenager has even quit talking we have figured out the solution in our own head and just can't wait to share it with them. But whose solution is it really? It is ours and not our teenager's. We have missed the opportunity to do a number of things...

1. We have missed the opportunity to build trust- Can your teen trust you to be that buffer between them and the stress by just being that shoulder to lean on? Listening is key.

2. We have missed the opportunity to teach them how to solve many of their own issues with wisdom and maturity. Ask them key questions in order to lead them to their own “aha” moment.

3. We have missed the opportunity to foster this tenuous relationship that we have with our teenager. It can be very fragile at times and we must handle it with care. If we build their confidence by making them feel valued because we are truly listening, we get to strengthen that bond!

This is a hard one for us, isn't it? We so very badly want our kids to succeed. And we feel if they would just listen to us, we could help them. They don't know how to listen unless we teach them. And how do we teach them if we won't first listen to them?

*Being heard is so close to being loved,...that they are almost indistinguishable! -Augsburger*