

## **Introduction:**

*"To connect with your children, first connect with yourself"* - Shefali Tsabary

One thing that most people agree upon is that the teenage years happen to be one of the most challenging phases in an individual's life.

During this transition period from childhood to adulthood, teenagers are exposed to both external and internal challenges, which could be social challenges, work and school pressures. This period of life is a growth phase with several changes in their life not only physical but also mental and social. It is usually marked by hormonal changes, puberty, social and parental issues. Amidst all these, they are also developing their self-identity as it is a time of transition into their adulthood roles and expectations. It is a time to make major decisions for the future which includes their academics and career choices. At home, teens may feel misunderstood and may yearn for better understanding from the people around them.

### **Key categorisation of terms by origin:**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Teenage	13-19	Term originated in the early 20th Century (from the US)
Adolescence	10-19	UN (United Nations)
Youth	15-24	WHO (World Health Organisation)

A person between 13 and 19 years of age is called a teenager as their age number ends with 'teen'. The word teenager is often mistakenly alternated with adolescence.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as an individual aged 0-18 years. In course of time, the UN has come to formally define adolescence as the period between 0-19 years of age. Adolescence is the name for the transitional period between childhood and adulthood, consisting of the teen and pre-teen years and is characterised by many physical, sexual, cognitive, social and emotional changes that can cause

anxiety for both children and their families. Around 16 % of the world's population falls in the adolescent category (10-19 years of age) as per WHO fact sheet of September 2020.

**Role of parents:** As parents, we need to dwell on all the aspects as seen on the left side of the diagram, that support our adolescents to grow into healthy and well-balanced adults who are also well prepared to take on their adult roles.

### **Parenting during adolescence:**

The story of 13-year-old Ronen comes to mind. He was going through the changes of puberty. His voice started sounding different, with some croaks and squeaks. Just as he was getting used to his changing body, he had to adapt to his changing voice, and it took a lot of effort to keep it under control. While his parents were understanding, his friends and peers were not and teased him about it every time he spoke. The support of his parents helped Ronen overcome the challenging time.

The adolescent years are a period of upheaval for families as children are developing on various fronts and it is challenging to keep pace and understand the evolving person. As parents we may notice our child changing physically, however, it could be hard to come to terms with the behaviour of our children as they seek to become more independent. They may grow more distant, as they transition into their new roles and responsibilities. Their interests may shift to friends and peers.

The report of September 2020, World Health Organisation (WHO), says that one in every 6 persons is an adolescent. Mental health conditions account for 16% of the global burden of disease and injury in adolescents. One worrying statistic is that half of all mental health conditions start by the age of 14. This global issue of adolescents experiencing mental health conditions remains under diagnosed and understated. We can gauge that violence due to authoritarian parenting, bullying and socio-economic problems are risks to the mental health of adolescents. One of the major solutions for this is to improve the quality of home life and relationships with peers.

According to a 2013 report, *Adolescents in India* by UNICEF, adolescents make up one fourth of the population of India. India has the largest adolescent population in the world, 253 million and every fifth person is an adolescent. India stands to benefit if this large number of adolescents are safe, educated, healthy and equipped with life skills to support the country's development.

Adolescents tend to rebel when they feel they are being controlled. It may not be an easy time for parents while dealing with adolescents, as they are evolving quickly, and their parents may not be well equipped to deal with the changing person. Parents may feel a sense of loss and sadness as they often miss the closeness which prevailed when their children were younger.

**Follow the P.A.R.T.N.E.R. strategy for HOLISTIC development of your teenager:**

Being a parent is all about partnering in your teenager's journey, in his/her transition to adulthood. When we change our perspective to partnering rather than controlling, there is a shift in the way we parent our child.

Here are the seven principles that unlock the door to positive teenage parenting:

- P- 'Partnering' with your child
- A- 'Ace' your communication
- R- 'Reassure' with unconditional love
- T- 'Teach' what matters
- N- 'Need' for the right kind of discipline
- E- It is all about Self - 'Esteem'
- R- 'Resilience' building

The **P.A.R.T.N.E.R.** strategy with its 7 principles forms the route map in the parenteening journey.

**The overview of the book with its three modules and the various chapters are given below:**

**Module 1** is all about Understanding the Teen years.

**Module 2** outlines the P.A.R.T.N.E.R. strategy with the 7 principles that unlock positive parenting.

**Module 3** deals with current issues that have a high possibility of affecting teens such as stress, depression, bullying, self-image, addictions (drugs, alcohol and smoking, cyber addiction) and peer pressure.

This book reflects all my experiences gleaned over the years as a mother, educationist and coach. All in all, writing the book has been a rewarding experience and I hope you will enjoy reading the book as much as I loved writing it. I was driven by the innate need to make Parenteening as simple as possible for my readers. This journey would be well worth it if I have been able to help you and have made you aware of a few things in the realm of parenteening.

I invite you to access additional support on the journey of parenteening by clicking on the link <https://www.teensgen.com/> where you can access:

- Free bonuses
- Resources for the book