

CONTRACT

A contract with a teenager helps them get their head around the idea that the world runs on a balance between rights and responsibilities, give and take and a sense of honouring your word. A formal contract with a teenager can be written together and then the deal shaken on along with a promise and a time frame.

By drawing up a formal contract, teenagers learn that their 'word' and their signature mean something. As you negotiate a contract with your teenager use the line - "Does that sound fair?" so that they feel respected and part of the process.

By setting the rules firmly at the beginning everyone is clear on expectations and when you operate some 'loosening' of the contract during special circumstances you then are seen as the 'good person' or an ally.

Here's a sample contract to use as a guide:

What I want

Use of the car on Friday night

What I am willing to do

Mowing the lawn, organising the recycling, sweeping out the garage, or other jobs written on my job list by 6pm on Friday

We parents will supply	I will in return
Hot water	Do my agreed jobs by Friday 6pm
Use of telephone	Agree to pass on any messages received on behalf of another, by writing it down with the date and time
A bed	Keep my room reasonably orderly and clean e.g. floor visible and no fungus
Healthy food	Cook a meal once a month
Television and DVD and internet by negotiation	Be considerate of other family member's when using phone, internet, TV
Transport	I agree to let mum and dad know when I am leaving the house, going to bed or my coming home time
Parents agree to set an example with our language and how we handle anger	I will use respectful and decent language to all family members

Signed _____