

REPORT ON PACCS CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

I AM THE PARENT OF A TEENAGER – GET ME OUT OF HERE

PAUL GAFFNEY

Excellent workshop and feedback from parents very positive. Also seemed to be the top choice of workshops

Why adolescence can be difficult? Lots of factors. There are 1,000 children each year who don't seem to make it through secondary school..

Values are more important than goals.

Being a parent is like being a sports manager

1. Be positive and expect to win.
2. Use a squad system – don't be on your own, use support of other parents and other people.
3. Get on the scoreboard early – take note of what they already do well.
4. Focus on effort, not outcome. – Effort far more important than outcome. Praise effort more than success.
5. It's a game of two halves – Normal and healthy to get on well and to have disputes with teenager. Learn to negotiate.
6. Play to the whistle – Have 3 to 6 essential rules, too many rules give away tactics. Good referees agree rules, good rules tell teenager what they can do instead of what they can't.
7. Don't count on popularity – Being effective does not always mean you are popular.
8. Don't worry about “offside” – Don't try to be a teenager.
9. It's a marathon not a sprint –teenager is different at beginning and end of teenage years. Parenting to protect – younger years. Parenting to prepare – teenagers.
10. Fancy taking a penalty? – Giving them responsibility is very helpful.
11. You can't win them all – No manager or parent will be successful all the time. It's not about who is right and who is wrong.

EXTRA TIME

1. Threats of running away – Try to talk and to listen. Talk when calm. Most useless questions are Why? They are not helpful
2. School Refusal / Lack of effort –First get them back to school and then try to sort out the problems around school. If persists contact professionals GP, Psychologist etc. Solve problem, don't try explaining
3. Threats of Suicide / Self harm – Take very seriously. ½ kids seen in clinic self harm, 10% of teenagers self harm. A lot is being in the wrong place at wrong time without proper resources. Interpersonal difficulties. Bad to keep saying don't don't don't.
4. Threats of or actual violence – garda juvenile officer can work closely with families.

5. Disrespect – Swearing, Ignoring. Don't get drawn into a row. They often don't know what to do. Speak to them when calm.

Minding yourself as well as them is very important.

Some reference books :

The complete secrets of happy children/parents Biddulph Steven and Sharon

The last self help book you'll ever need Pearsall P.

Websites www.mindyourself.ie

www.getselfhelp.com