

8 (MOSTLY) SCREEN-FREE WAYS TO SPEND TIME WITH YOUR TEEN

We all spent probably way too much time looking at screens in 2020. So with school back in person and families navigating a new "Covid-normal" life, here are eight ideas for how to connect with you teen.

1 LEARN A NEW HOBBY

Pick up a new sport or hobby and learn something new together! Take a class, watch online videos or use a coach/tutor. You'll model life-long learning and show your teen you're never too old to learn new things.

2 GO ON A DATE

That's right! Take you teen out to a nice dinner, just mother-son, father-daughter or any combination of parent-teen. No one takes their phone or device out the entire meal and see what great conversation emerges over a shared meal.



3 COOK TOGETHER

Speaking of shared meals, teens can eat a lot! So why don't teach your teen how to prepare their favourite meal from start to finish. Have them prepare it for the entire family and see if their confidence grows in the process.

4 DISCUSS A BOOK

Pick a book from a genre that your teen is interested in. Read it separately on your own time but then come together regularly to discuss. This could also be a good way to get your teen to read up on a topic that you're less comfortable talking about. Have them read on their own time then start a discussion after.

5 WATCH YOU TUBE

Teens watch more videos on YouTube than any other video format! So spend some time getting to know which You Tube influencers they are watching and following and watch along with them. There's some really creative stuff out there, but there's also some not so great stuff, so spend time in your teen's world understanding who they "follow" and why they like them.

6 PLAY VIDEO GAMES

If you really want to get into the world of your teen and if they are into video games, ask them to teach you how to play one of their favourite games. Learn about the characters, the different strategies and what makes they so fun (i.e. addictive). You'll be surprised how much more you have to talk about if you can hold a conversation about their virtual world.

7 PLAY CARDS

It's a very simple and easy way to spend time together. Start a new summer tradition of coming together for a short card game in the evenings. Chat about your day in between hands or just share a lot of laughs. Current favourites are Sushi Go! and Exploding Kittens.

8 TAKE A TRIP TOGETHER

Pack your bags for an overnighter, a weekend or longer if you can spare the time. Some of the sweetest memories with your teen can come through the shared experience of traveling to unfamiliar places and exploring the surroundings together.