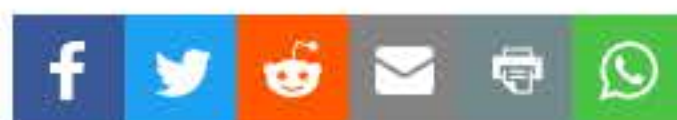


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Eight discussions to have with your teenage child before college



Dr Malini Saba

From finishing school to moving into a hostel, the outside world is as chaotic as the one inside their minds. But amid this chaos, parents need to make time to talk with their teens about college. While it may seem like they can handle this transition on their own, the parent's reassuring guidance is extremely important. Talking about the transition before the teenager leaves can ease some of their stress and help set them up for future success. Here are eight discussions to have with your teenage child before college:

- Peer pressure:** College is a time where people experiment with a lot of things. While exploring new things is a good thing, doing things because their friends are doing is hardly a reason. This can be well imparted to any situation child is not comfortable with or goes against their gut instincts. Always ask them to weigh the situation and then take a call without succumbing to peer pressure.
- Overall development:** Ask them to partake in different competitions, join different clubs and explore horizons instead of sticking to their class bench. Ask them to take measures for their overall development where they can focus on a greater dynamics of success.
- Develop social skills:** Standing ships never get to see the ocean. This can be applied to college students who don't go out and develop their social skills. Children must be taught about getting to know more people and learning about different cultures — after all, college is a melting pot of students from across the country.
- Self-confidence:** A lot of times children's are tested based on how they look, talk, walk and hold to unrealistic standards. They should be taught not to be bogged down by them and have self-confidence that will tide them through these ridiculously patriarchal thought processes.
- Stand your ground:** A 'no' means 'no'. College children are just stepping into a world where they will be asked to do something unethical, something they are not comfortable with, etc. They should stand their ground and refuse to do something they don't want and have their own opinions without yielding down to anyone!
- Take (calculated) risks:** It is important to take calculated risks to see results. Young children's should be encouraged to move beyond their comfort zone and hold, but should listen to their gut. Get on that stage and sing your heart out.
- Birds and bees:** The idea is not to keep them away from sex and intimacy but improve their awareness to ensure that they don't move in the wrong direction. Talk to them about safe sex and instead shaming them for having a human side, try answering their questions and clearing the doubts they might have.
- The essence of academics:** How can we let academics take a back seat? Ensure that your Children's are well aware of the importance of studies and should have their focus on it for a bright future.