

# How to Help Your Teen Overcome Shyness

If you think your teen is shy, then follow these simple strategies and tips to help bring them out of their shell.



Being shy isn't a bad thing.

But when you have a shy teenager, it might be that they are suffering from low confidence. This shyness can interfere with a teenager's ability to speak their mind, join in with social activities, or even meet new friends.

If you think your teen is letting their shyness get in the way of living their best life, then follow these simple strategies and tips to help bring them out of their shell.

## What is Shyness?

Everyone has felt shy at some point in their lives - some more than others. Personality, genetics, and life experiences can all be factors in a teen's feelings of shyness. It's felt as a mix of emotions, such as tension, fear, self-consciousness, and interest. Physical symptoms can also occur when you feel shy, including raised blood pressure and heart rate.

Teens may be more likely to have unhealthy coping skills to deal with their shyness. These can include things like being unable to make a decision and let their opinion be known, not speaking up in school, and therefore not getting the help they might need - meaning their schoolwork could suffer. You might notice your teenager is shy by how they're acting; averted gaze, physically withdrawing and a reluctance to speak or open up.

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Shyness isn't necessarily a problem, and it's more than OK if your teen takes time to warm up to new situations and people, or needs some time before they can open up to you. But, if their shyness seems to be blocking people or opportunities, then these tips could help them overcome their shy persona.

## Take Time to Understand Them

You might be keen to help your teen overcome their shyness, but before you can do that, you need to take the time to understand them.

Building a bond with your teenager can be done by showing sensitivity and empathy towards their interests and feelings. Find out what they like, what makes them tick, and what could potentially be holding them back. Not only does this show how much you care about them, but it will help you discover things about them you might not have known. Giving you a deeper, empathetic perspective.

When you understand your teenager, they might start to feel more confident and open, helping them to share more easily.

## Don't Be Pushy

You might want to encourage your teen to become more socially proactive or more assertive in certain situations, but if you push them too much, they might find it overwhelming and threatening, causing them to retreat even more.

Instead of pushing them without enough warning, help your teenager feel secure by chatting with them about new social encounters, such as what they can expect, who might be there, what they might be talking about, etc. Do this a few days leading up to the event, and bring it into the conversation every day leading up to it, little by little. This could help give them more confidence and feel assured about what they can expect.

## Boost Their Self-Esteem

When teenagers are on the shy side, they often lack social skills, and might even suffer from poor self-image, making them feel like they won't be accepted by their peers.

This can be so difficult for a parent, and the chances are you want to do everything you can to make your teenager see themselves the way you do.

You can support your teen by helping to develop their self-esteem and understand their worth. Let them know how proud you are of them and praise them for any small steps they make to speak up. Encourage their efforts and make them feel good about themselves. When a teenager feels confident and motivated, they are less likely to be shy.

## Provide Opportunities For Them to Speak Up

When you have a shy teenager, you want to make the world easier for them. That could mean speaking for them when you know they have trouble speaking for themselves.

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Although you do this to help them, you could see these moments as an opportunity to encourage them to voice their thoughts. If they need an appointment booked for the doctor, hairdresser, dentist, etc, coach them to make the call themselves. You can walk them through what to say, or even write it down so they don't fumble on their words. If you're going out to eat at a restaurant, suggest that they order their meal for themselves, and ask any questions they might have about the food.

These might seem like small steps, but these little opportunities for speaking up can provide a solid foundation to overcome shyness.

## Encourage Their Talents

Does your shy teenager have a talent or interest they're harbouring? Do a little research and see if you can find any clubs, societies, or other opportunities local to you (or perhaps even in their school) that might be up your teen's street.

Once you've found something, don't push it on your teenager too much. Have a casual conversation about what you've found, let them know the day and time it is, and gently encourage them to look into it.

You can offer to explore it further together, which could spark a conversation about other interests they might have - which might, in turn, create other opportunities for social activities. Just remember to lead gently and always show encouragement, optimism, and praise.