

Daughters

In this short article, we will consider daughters from both a Dad's and a Mom's point of view although the information is useful for any youthworker working with girls as it gives insights into how they think and how they need to be treated.

Dads and Daughters

Your role in your daughters life is made very significant because you are the first male that she will relate to and she will constantly be seeking your approval. Whenever possible you should encourage her in two main areas: skills and appearance. Take the time to go and watch her perform in school plays and sporting events and congratulate her on the skills she shows. At parent teacher evenings, go along and praise her in front of her teachers - don't make it up or be over the top, be sincere and real. Tell her she is beautiful too - particularly during adolescence she will question her looks and appearance and, as an influential male, you have the privilege of shaping her view of herself. It is important, too, that it is you that tells her these things - affirmation from Mom is essential but also from Dad.

Don't be shy of giving her physical affection too - they need it. Of course I am talking of appropriate affection and I would strongly urge you to seek help if you feel this could be an issue for you. However 3 hugs a day for maintenance sounds like a good idea. Statistics imply that they will get their hugs from other males if Dad hasn't been as generous as he could be.

Moms and Daughters

The issues that moms and daughters face are different but still very real in the life of a teenage young woman. One of them is that there can be a risk of the mother dominating and seeking to make their daughter like themselves. Instead encourage them to be their own person - their own hair style, clothing or bedroom decor. The art is helping them maintain the balance between fashion and modesty at times!

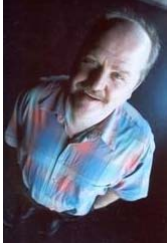
I am sure you will realise that time spent with your daughter is a wise investment for the future and it may work out well to share a hobby or activity together - scrapbooking or cross stitch have been popular in our family. It is during these times together that she will pick up on your values. For example, you will teach your daughter about gossip by your words in action as you go about your daily life.

Tension between mother and teenage daughter is normal as they are seeking to grow from dependant child to independent adult and the journey through adolescence is often a rocky road. How you handle this is very important and patience is the order of the day. It is also good that you vocalise your approval and appreciation at this time in her life.

One other quick thing whilst we are on the subject [and this is particularly important if you have sons in the house too], avoid stereotyping her into doing all the girlie things around the house - boys hands are fully capable of washing dishes and they also benefit from training in laundry essentials - maybe more about that in a future article.

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About Nigel

Nigel has been paid to work with young people since 1991 and did it voluntarily before then. He actually believes he hasn't been to work since then because he enjoys himself so much. He is available for private consultation and coaching as well as having resources available e.g. **Understanding Teenagers A-Z**.
