

Rules for Relationships

- 1.** It's always okay to ask for help.
- 2.** You can only control your own behavior. You can't control anybody else's behavior.
- 3.** Teenagers can't fix their parents' problems. Only parents can fix their own problems. The parents may need to ask for help, and it's okay for them to ask for help.
- 4.** Kill-them-with-kindness sandwiches are great ways to set limits or boundaries. Example: "I'm really glad you're my boyfriend, Jack. But I'm just not going to let you hit me, shove me, or push me around. I'm just not going to let that be part of any relationship. I'm sure we can find a way to solve our disagreements without force, because I really care for you."
- 5.** I statements are great ways to express feelings: "I feel _____ when you _____ because _____."

For example: "I feel angry when you and Mom fight all the time because I'm afraid you're going to get a divorce."

- 6.** You can experience feelings, share them, and let them go. You can tolerate (put up with) feelings because they will pass. You can also choose to do things that make you feel better.
- 7.** You can't control the feelings you get. However, you can look at your thinking, or self-talk, and change it from negative to positive. You can control your behavior. You can use your feelings to give you the power to make changes. You can learn to use problem-solving skills.
- 8.** You can take care of yourself. This is self-preservation, not selfishness.
- 9.** It's always a good idea to repeat positive affirmations for yourself.
Example: "I am lovable and capable."
- 10.** It's good practice to share caring, positive feelings and thoughts. Remember the three Ps: Be pleasant, positive, and polite.