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Helping Your Gifted Child Through The Emotional Turmoil of the Teenage Years

1. Accept that mood swings are a normal part of adolescence and that gifted kids are more intense and can be more volatile.
2. Be calm. Try not to engage in power plays and negotiations. Remember that judgment lags far behind thinking in gifted kids. Even though your child intensely believes he is right, he may be wrong.
3. Don't dwell on the worst possible outcome. Looking at the upside of any emotional turmoil will instantly calm down your child.
4. Do not put your child's emotional outburst into perspective by thinking about what your child is really reacting to when he or she is upset. For example, Why is her haircut so important?
5. Set limits that you can follow through on. Don't over-do it but don't give in.
6. Listen and empathize with your child but don't give up your authority. Your child will learn through your modeling how to deal with adversity.
7. Use the stressful roller coaster ride as a teaching point when your child is calm.

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Ways to Prevent the Emotional Roller Coaster Rides of the Teenage Years in Gifted Kids

1. Communicate with your child daily about her day and your day. This teaches her you are a part of her world and thus a qualified listener.
2. Make sure your child understands and respects your values. Although he will inevitably reject your opinion, it gives him a fallback option.
3. Explain in a variety of different ways what the consequences of inappropriate behavior are. You can use these reminders when you need them.
4. Keep family time as special and interesting by visiting areas of special interest to your child. This will allow your child to connect with you.
5. Keep your child involved in healthy peer groups that reflect your child's interests. This can be hard but keep trying.
6. Stay connected with your child's teachers and school. This is so important to your child's emotional and intellectual growth.