

## Step 6: A Temporary Pause

Step 6 constitutes a temporary pause in your relationship with your teenager.

Although you can execute this step on your own, I would recommend you consult some type of counseling professional before you do this, just to make sure that you have not overlooked another solution. Step 6 is drastic.

If your teenager has not responded to anything you have done up until now, then your only choice at this point is to put a temporarily limit on your relationship. This is extremely hard to do for parents.

The first thing you must decide is how much of a separation you are willing to bring about. Here are some options.

You could:

- **Arrange for your child to move in with a relative.**
- **Send your child to a boarding school.** Keep in mind your child has to want this option. Boarding schools are very hesitant to accept students that don't want to be there.
- **Enroll your child in a troubled teen program.** This is a variation on the boarding school. There are numerous programs popping up all over the country that will help your teen. Some may not require your child to want to be there.
- **Have your teenager board by another family.** Your child may know of other families that will agree to let him stay there for a modest cost. The great advantage of this option is that your child knows that this family will never tolerate the kind of behavior that he has been showing you. If he doesn't behave himself, then the family is going to kick him out. This is a big incentive to change his behavior and is an excellent chance for growth.
- **Provide financial support but allow your teenager to make his own living arrangements**
- **Declare to juvenile court that your child is out of your control and make him a ward of the court.** The court will place your child in a juvenile facility and you will have to pay for it.
- **Just send your child away from home.** Please note that unless your child is 18 or considered an adult because he or she is married or has a child, this is against the law. Many parents do this anyway.

You have to choose how much of a break in the relationship you are willing to tolerate.

Once you decide which path you are willing to choose, the next step is to inform your child.

You will make a two part statement.

- In the first part you will again state what you want.
- In the second part you state what you are going to do if you don't get what you want and by when you want it.

“George, I am extremely unhappy with our relationship. You have dropped out of school and do nothing to help out around here. I don't want a freeloader in my house. I am giving you two weeks to either return to school or get a job. If I don't see one of these things happen in the next two weeks, I am afraid you are going to have to find another place to live.”

“Betty, I simply will not tolerate your rude behavior and your coarse language anymore. If I don't see a change in the next few days, you are going to have to leave the house. I have already spoken with Uncle Ted, and he is willing to have you stay there if you so choose. But unless I see a real effort on your part to treat me better, you are not going to be allowed to live here.”

**Your Statement** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Date Delivered** \_\_\_\_\_ **Deadline for Improvement** \_\_\_\_\_