



Professional support for children
through a parent's illness.

Tips for Communicating with Teens

- Be mindful of your non-verbal cues including your moods. Your teen may sense that asking you questions will make you uncomfortable or add stress, which makes them hesitate to talk with you.
- Be honest about the illness, accident or situation. Truthfulness builds trust.
- Be aware of your teen's unique coping skills. Think how they have handled difficult situations in the past.
- Consider your teen's emotional and mental state, and based on that, adjust your timing for sharing important information to match the best time for your teen.
- Remember teens often choose to talk at their convenience, so try to make yourself available.
- Consider talking in a location where your teen doesn't have to sit face-to-face with you. Eye contact can make difficult conversation harder.
- Explain how family routines may change and how this may impact your teen.
- Listen more than talk.
- Avoid judgmental statements, slang, and telling your own experiences – especially stories from your time as a teenager!