



Tuning into Teens

A 6 session parenting program for parents of adolescents 11 - 18 years (followed by 2 booster sessions 1 & 2 months apart)

Information for referring agencies

Tuning into teens follows the same basis as *Tuning into kids* and aims to assist parents to teach their adolescents how to understand and regulate their emotions. The program emphasises that emotions are central for communication and connection.

Research has begun to show us that human beings who are aware of their own emotions and others' emotions (and who can use this important information in their lives) have qualitatively different experiences to those who do not. They tend to have closer, more satisfying relationships, can manage the challenges of life, have better health and wellbeing and are more likely to achieve their goals. People's emotional competencies tend to be learned during the early years and then refined and consolidated throughout adolescence. *Tuning into Teens* is a program that aims to assist parents to help their teenager understand and express their emotions in appropriate ways. It is a program which offers an intervention based on evidence from clinical trials and field work which has been gained in community settings.

Tuning into Teens focuses on developing supportive, emotionally responsive parenting. Parents play a very important role in shaping and teaching emotional skills to their adolescents, despite what many parents believe. This role - helping teens to understand and regulate their emotions is referred to as emotion coaching throughout the program.

The program broadly looks at:

- what is happening during adolescence
- what is emotional competence and how does it develop
- what influence do parents have on adolescents' emotional competence
- the family's emotional climate (eg family violence, AOD use, mental health issues)

It teaches parents:

- awareness and regulation of their own emotions
- to develop skills to help their teen name emotions
- to manage their own feelings of rejection when their teen pushes them away

- to assist their teen to learn to problem solve
- to use emotional self-care and manage strong emotions

The research evaluation of *Tuning in to Teens* found that when parents learned these parenting skills, it was related to improvements in their young person's emotional competence, social skills and behaviour.

For further information on the program see: <http://www.tuningintokids.org.au/> (Look for tuning into teens tab) or contact PSFANS.

Please call 49874674 to refer a family. Groups are limited to 8 parents and are offered in varying venues and locations throughout Port Stephens. Depending on capacity at the time we may be able to offer the program on a one on one basis. In addition, the ideas and strategies offered in *Tuning into Teens* can often be new information for parents and it can be useful for parents to complete the program twice.