

# Dads Group Focus 1: Emotions



Key Message: Warning - my mood swings can occur without warning.

## Dads handout

It is important to understand the biological basis of why your adolescent may be behaving in a more emotional way than they have previously, and why you are having more conflict with them. Try not to dismiss the way they feel. It's important that you help them find healthy ways to express and manage their emotions.

## Top Tips for dealing with emotional outbursts

- A calm voice and relaxed tone can help settle the situation.
- Let them know that it is good for them to talk about their emotions. Listen with an open mind. Don't get angry or cut them off, they need to know they can share their voice with you, and you will not judge them.
- Role model how to express emotions in acceptable ways.
- Help them to learn ways to manage their strong emotions i.e. calming their breathing, counting to 10, taking some time out.
- 'Cooling off' time. If you feel that you or your adolescent are getting too emotional, angry, or upset it is better to take some time and let things cool down.
- Choose your battles wisely. Be aware of which issues are not worth the drama and let these things go. Wait for a calmer moment to bring up the issues you need to follow up on.
- Make sure that your conflicts don't destroy your communication. The aim should always be to have a calm conversation and come to an agreement about how to go forward.



## Takeaway action

Tune in to how your adolescent is feeling over the course of a week and aim to discuss expressing and managing emotions.

Try telling them about a time you had to manage your emotions and what went well and not so well.



## Links

This Fathering strategy comes from the Fathering Fundamental.