

Your Employee Assistance Program is a support service that can help you take the first step toward change.

Why Young Adults Are Not Moving Out

It’s common for young adults to remain in their parent's home longer than in previous generations, and for many to return to live with parents after a period of independent living. Living with adult children can be great, but it can also put a lot of pressure on families when there are several adults living together.

Since the expansion of colleges and universities led to higher rates of enrollment, increased school retention levels and young adults finding it more difficult to find well paying first jobs, there is a higher dependence on parents for support.

Tips and Tools You Can Use

One of the results is a new adjustment on the home front, as parents and their young adult try to determine how to live together. Here are some approaches that may help you ease the tension with your young adults:

- You need to let go of the parenting role, such as telling your children what to do or wear, nagging them and doing their jobs for them. But at the same time, continue your friendship and support as they work these things out for themselves.
- Clear adult-to-adult expectations need to be spelled out, such as who will do what and how you will speak to each other. This reduces the stress and makes it easier to live together.
- There will be mistakes at first, on both sides. You need to be able to talk about these, hopefully laugh about them, and get on with making things work better.
- When an adult child asks to return home, it’s important to say "Yes—but we need to work out the conditions." It’s easier to negotiate conditions beforehand. If this doesn't happen, conflict will eventually arise because you expect things to work one way and your child expects something else.
- You need to decide such things as:
    - How much board or rent is reasonable, or if your child has limited income what he or she can do in return for you helping them with money or board?
    - Who will shop for groceries?
    - Who will do the cooking and other household chores?
    - Are you willing to lend him or her the car and under what conditions?
    - What expectations do you have when his or her friends are in your house?
    - Who will pay the phone bill, and if it’s you, what are the limits on calls?
    - What are the conditions for respecting each other's privacy, noise level, etc?
- One of the most important areas to talk about is money. How much the young adult pays toward the cost of the household is different for each family, but some things to take into account are:
    - How much income he or she has
    - Family income

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- Household costs for the young adult (e.g., how much he or she uses the phone, does he or she run a heater in the bedroom, does he or she often have friends over and use a lot of food, etc).

Moving out to start a life away from home is a large step and one that will bring your teen one step closer to adulthood. However, making this move is a life event that cannot be rushed. Be sure to support your child as he or she makes the transition to adulthood and, as a parent, know that your guidance will be most appreciated during this time.