[Giving Teens Their Voice Back](http://www.theparenttree.com/web/blog/entry/Back_to_school/giving_teens_their_voice_back)

[Chelsa Salvani](http://www.theparenttree.com/web/welcome/ViewProfileById/4)

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**Enhancing Teen Communication: Giving Teens Their Voice Back**  
*Interview with Lori Kelman, Founder & CEO*

Teens are doing it everywhere- during class, at the dinner table, with friends, and in bed. Teenagers text…all the time. You probably have accepted your kid’s smartphone to be like a third hand and are used to talking to the top of your kid’s head as they look down to text. It’s great how instant we can communicate with each other but when a teen uses texting to avoid face to face interactions, their opportunities and learning abilities become crippled. With a combination of not enough resources or attention at school and the fast, high-tech society we are evolving in, teens are shying away from developing in-person relationships in favor of hiding behind the comfort of their phones. Enhancing Teen Communication (E-T-C) is the missing link to helping texting-obsessed teens make relationships beyond their phones.

Founder and CEO Lori Kelman recognized this increasing problem of kids lacking the skills and practice of developing face-to-face relationships. Using her 30 years of professional experience in major market on-air Radio/TV News and Fortune 500 public relations/media relations/marketing, Lori has written an effective hands-on program for teens that is the only one of its caliber in the nation. Where schools are struggling in teaching these important communication skills, E-T-C fills the gap.

The Enhancing Teen Communications classes are held “live” in Mission Viejo but the program is also available online nationwide. Parents, teens, and teachers anywhere can purchase the Student Training Manual, CDs, or MP3 downloads. Lori also provides live training to help teachers implement the program in their classroom, and conducts “train-the-trainer” webinars for those out-of-state.



The 8-module program is geared towards teens ages 12-18, and Lori has gone out of her way to insure that the needs of every teen are met – regardless of their comfort level. “The ‘live’ class is great for students who want to learn from each other and aren’t afraid of speaking in front of a class, but the online teaching tools are great for shy teens who would prefer to learn at their own pace and in the comfort of their own environment. The information is the same, but the hands-on exercises are different yet equally effective.”

The program is divided into 8 modules, and each module is devoted to a different form of communication. Resume Writing, Public Speaking, Interviewing, Marketing, Broadcasting, News Writing, Public Relations, and Media Relations. “The intent of the program is to take students from the most basic form of communication by painting a picture of who they are on paper, all the way to learning about professions that revolve around communication.” An added feature of the “live” class in Mission Viejo includes a field trip to a Los Angeles radio station where kids go into the on-air studios and make their own news CD.

Helping teens to develop these important communication skills goes well beyond a classroom setting. Lori recommends that parents do mock job interviews with their kids at home to use role-play as a teaching tool. “Public speaking is a big fear for lots of teens, so the support from parents can be instrumental in developing self-confidence and building self-esteem for a child.” - Lori says it’s never too young to encourage kids to work to help them learn responsibility. “Even helping an elderly neighbor to unload their groceries, per-sitting, or gardening can help lay the foundation.”

Every child develops at a different pace, and the Enhancing Teen Communication™ program that Lori has developed takes that into consideration.

“Texting is a symptom of a much bigger interpersonal problem in society today, but it isn’t the cause of the problem. Technology is something parents just need to help their kids integrate into their lives in an appropriate, balanced manner so they don’t forget how to interact effectively face-to-face like the rest of us do.”



Lori is in the process of implementing her program into schools across the country and plans to develop both a board game and a virtual game of the program. Lori ends our interview with a story that shows where her passion and drive stem from that has made E-T-C successful.

“When teaching my daughter’s 4th-5th grade class for a semester, the first assignment I had them do was to speak about themselves for 3 minutes in front of the whole class. One little girl was so shy and didn’t speak the entire 3 minutes- it broke my heart. After working with the kids, the last assignment I had them do was that same 3 minute presentation. The same sweet, little girl who couldn’t say a single word the first time, was now talking nonstop for those 3 minutes. At the end of the class, she came up to me and said, “I want to thank you for giving me my personality. My heart melted, and I immediately knew my purpose.”

The next “live” program in Mission Viejo – runs from September 13 until November 1, Thursday nights from - 7:00-8:30. Register online at [econnect.cityofmissionviejo.org](http://www.theparenttree.com/web/blog/entry/Back_to_school/econnect.cityofmissionviejo.org) or call 949-470-3062. Space is limited and sessions are ongoing. <http://enhancingteencommunication.com/>

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