

# HOT TIPS for Parents

## How to Negotiate with Teens About Attending GAIN

### 1. Choose the right time & space to ask.

Do not ask if they 'want to come'. They will say "No" straight away and you will have no room left to negotiate.

Try to speak in a way that's friendly but firm, such as:

*"I've heard about this GAIN programme and I would really like to do this. I think I'd learn a lot, and I'd like you to come with me."*

Young people like to know it's not all about them being 'bad' or 'the problem'.

It's often useful to say YOU want to go because YOU would learn a lot.

Repeat this if challenged.

*"This would be a good thing for our whole family... there's lots of things we do well but I'd like to make it even better."*

Do not tell them they *must* go, especially in the midst of an argument. Then it will seem like a punishment and it will then be very hard to get them to agree.



### 2. Avoid putting pressure for an immediate answer.

Give them a brochure to look at and say you'll give them time to think and will get back to them in a day or two. Then repeat your invitation.

If met with a "No" try asking gently  
*"What are your thoughts about this?"*

You will probably be met with an "It's dumb/stupid/boring". You could respond with:

*"Yes, you're right. It could be boring. We don't know. And I really want to go."*

Acknowledge their feelings:

*"It can feel a bit weird, going to something new. I still want to go."* or

*"You're mad about missing your TV programme. I can understand this. I think this would be great for our family and I want us to go."* or

*"I know it might be a bit embarrassing, coming with me. I'll be very careful not to embarrass you."*

And please note:

GAIN is *not* for weird families or losers. We're not offering family therapy or trying to 'fix' people. We're just saying all of us can learn new skills & communicate better! That's what life is all about! And...

- There is no pressure on anyone to share personal stuff.
- And it's *not* about adults having the last word.
- You don't even have to sit next to or work in the same group as your parent or teen!



"What about hamburger each night on the way home?"

And so on...

"Well ..... not necessarily money. But I can see it's hard for you to get excited about it. I'd be prepared to offer something"

"I'd rather have a movie"

"Nah. Nothing. I don't want to"

"I'm very keen to go to this. What would it take to get you on"

"What do you mean? Like, pay me?"



### Contracting

You are still getting a "No way! NO!" response, so consider offering a contract.

This is not a bribe!

It is a transaction which benefits both.

You get something you want (i.e. coming to the programme) and they get some small concession or reward. It's one of the great skills we teach in GAIN.

We call it a 'WIN-WIN' solution.