

#2-FIND MOTIVATION

What actually motivates your teen to follow your rules?

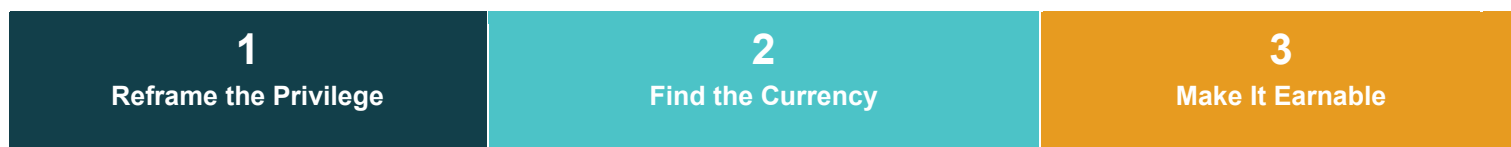


Adapted from Strategy 5: Techniques to Solve Your Teenager's Behavioral Problems in Dr. Scott Sells' book, *Parenting Your Out-of-Control Teenager*, pages 144–151.

Use this free tool when your teen says, “I don’t care,” refuses to follow the household rules, or acts like nothing matters.

The goal is to discover what your teen actually cares about — and what can motivate them to follow household rules.

I call this “finding your teen’s currency.”



STEP 1

“Rights” vs. Earned “Privileges”

Your teen often confuses “wants” with “needs”. Just because they want it doesn’t mean they need it.

A phone, rides, gaming, clothes, going out, and extra freedom are privileges— not rights.

Old Mindset: “It’s Mine”	New Mindset: “Earn It Daily”
“You can’t take my phone.”	“You earn your phone with respectful behavior.”
“Everyone else gets to go.”	“Freedom grows when trust grows.”
“I should get it because I want it.”	“Privileges are earned by following the rules.”

STEP 2

Discover Your Teen's Top Currency

Check what your teen cares about most. Rank Order the Top 3

Rank Order	Possible Currency	Rank Order	Possible Currency
	Electronics (video games, Xbox, computer) ☐ Yes ☐ No They Want: _____		Loosening Restrictions (more trust, more time online) ☐ Yes ☐ No They Want: _____
	Smartphone (apps, screen time, phone upgrades) ☐ Yes ☐ No They Want: _____		More Trust (clear path to earning trust back) ☐ Yes ☐ No They Want: _____
	Freedom (weekends, hanging out, going places) ☐ Yes ☐ No They Want: _____		Appearance (hair, clothes, piercings, etc.) ☐ Yes ☐ No They Want: _____
	Clothes (thrift store finds, shoes, online shopping) ☐ Yes ☐ No They Want: _____		Other Material Items (makeup, skateboard, sports gear) ☐ Yes ☐ No They Want: _____
	Transportation (driving, rides, car help) ☐ Yes ☐ No They Want: _____		Special Outings (fun road trips, friend time, family bonding) ☐ Yes ☐ No They Want: _____

STEP 3

Convert Currency Into Rewards and Consequences

Once you know what matters to your teen, connect it to one clear rule.

The privilege becomes both your teen's reward for following the rule and their consequence if that rule is broken.

My Teen's Top 3 Currencies (Pick one)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The Rule I Want Followed

Examples include no aggression, no lying, no disrespect, no school refusal, or no screen battles.

My Target Rule:

Reward: What They Earn

When my teen follows the rule, they earn their top currency which is their EARNED PRIVILEGE OR REWARD:

Keep it clear, short, and connected to what they care about.

Consequence: What They Lose

When my teen breaks the rule, they lose their currency or REWARD

Stay calm. Do not debate. The written plan does the talking.

QUICK EXAMPLE

Rule: No threats or acts of Aggression. **Teen's top currency:** TV or gaming in their room.

Reward: Each day no threats or acts of aggression = Earns the privilege of TV and gaming the next day.

Consequence: If threats or act of aggression happen= Loss privilege of TV and gaming- remote controls removed next day

REMEMBER

If your teen gets everything no matter how they behave, they have little reason to change.

Privileges must be earned.



Want to go deeper?

1. Learn It Yourself.

Read *Strategy 5, pages 144–148, in Parenting Your Out-of-Control Teenager*. Visit the **Book** page in the navigation bar at **ExtremeTeen.com**.

2. Get Coaching Help to Use It.

If you want a parent coach to help you apply this tool to your family, visit the **Parent Coaching** page in the navigation bar at **ExtremeTeen.com** and book a free 15 minute consultation call.