What parenting approach should I take?

The evidence is clear about how to effectively bring up teenagers today. You need to be involved in their lives without being over-bearing, over-controlling and over-pushy. Getting the balance between taking an Interest in their lives and having too big an investment in their lives is tricky. It's worth remembering that your job is to eventually guide them into adulthood and make yourself redundant as a parent in the traditional sense.

There is no doubt that an authoritative parenting style is best for bringing up young people. This style involves a mixture of limits and boundaries accompanied by relationship-building, encouragement and nurturance. This style is sometimes called "Influence-based" parenting, as it's more about parents Influencing kids than controlling them. It's also known as "tough love" as it involves a mixture of firmness and warmth.

5 features of authoritative parenting:

1. There are rules and routines in place with flexibility in application.
2. Consultation and choice is the preferred management option but dependent on age and stage of young people's development.
3. Parents work hard to establish an atmosphere of warmth and friendliness at home.
4. Time given to training and teaching for autonomy and independence.
5. There is plenty of encouragement and feedback rather than personal put downs and criticism.

The authoritative approach, by definition, means that parents stay connected with their young people so they can maintain their influence over them. Effective communication is dependent on both family communication processes that enable people to connect as well as personal communication style.