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Shopping is a great way for a mom and a teen daughter to build on their relationship, says counselor Tammy Jennings.

Giving moms, daughters a chance to bond

Retreat focuses on dealing with turbulent teen years

By Zenaida Serrano Espanol
ADVERTISER STAFF WRITER

In many households with growing girls, the teen years are terrible years — a time when know-it-all daughters begin to pull away from their clueless mothers.

Though it may sound trite, experts say keeping communication lines open is the key to having a healthy mother-daughter relationship.

A Mother-Daughter Retreat offered by the Hawai'i Wellness Institute tomorrow at the institute's Retreat Center in Kalihi will provide insight on how to do just that.

Tammy Jennings, a counselor and a doula (a person who provides emotional support for new mothers) for families for the Teen Intervention Program at Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women and Children, will conduct the event, which she recommends for daughters ages 10 to 18.

Jennings offers a sneak peek into the retreat with these tips on strengthening the mother-daughter bond:

- Have mutual respect and treat each other as you would treat any other guests in your home.
- Be patient with each other as you

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Retreat: Program's aim is stronger relationships

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grow. Understand that being a teenager is just as hard as being mother to one.

■ Appreciate each others' efforts. Notice the made bed, the fed cat or dog, the homework done on time or the dinner on the table.

■ Spend time together doing something fun, whether it's watching a movie, cooking, walking or shopping.

The retreat is being held close to Thanksgiving and Christmas for a reason, said Sunny Massad, president and founder of the Hawai'i Wellness Institute.

"During the holidays, families should maintain or create traditions, rather than get caught up in all the stress-related" activities, Massad said. "We're trying to establish a bond in that relationship before the madness begins."

At the retreat, mothers and daughters will work on communication skills and mutual appreciation, Jennings said. "The focus will be on remaining in the present while setting groundwork for the future."

Mothers and daughters will be introduced to activities that will enhance their relationships, in-

Mother-daughter Retreat

- 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Tomorrow
- Hawai'i Wellness Institute's Retreat Center, Kalihi
- \$79 per mother and daughter pair
- To register or for details: 848-5544 or 263-4069

cluding massage techniques, role playing and craft activities.

"There will also be time to share stories of humor that will remind us all that we tend to take ourselves far too seriously," Jennings said.

Another Mother-Daughter Retreat will take place Jan. 4. To register or learn more about these events, phone 848-5544 or 263-4069.