

#WAYFINDING • WAIT UNTIL COLLEGE • ADHD

YOUR TeenTM

for parents

Q&A with
Pulitzer Prize
winner Anna
Quindlen

2014 Gift Guide:

*Ideas teens and parents
will love*

SIBLING RIVALRY

Embrace it!

Nicknames

What's in a name?

Thanksgiving

Finding gratitude

Headphones

Are they killing our
hearing?

VOL. 7 ISSUE 2
NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2014 \$3.95

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PHOTO: BETH SEGAL

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EDITOR'S LETTER

When my kids were little, the fighting and bickering drove me insane. As my kids got older and we added more siblings to the mix, the tension increased and there was constant fighting: her piece is bigger than mine (I want more!), she sat next to daddy yesterday (It's my turn), why do I have to go to bed now? (You love him more) ... ad infinitum. Five personalities vying for the biggest portion of everything just drove me nuts.

So in a moment of raw need, I came up with a solution. Kid of the Week. The beloved toy, seat, towel and chore? Perks of being Kid of the Week. Who gets to sit next to dad for the whole week? Kid of the Week. It worked like magic. Of course, tension among the kids presented in other ways, but we saw a noticeable reduction in bickering. It was music to my ears.

But, KOTW stopped working well before adolescence, and I never found the next system. After reading the wisdom of Amy Speidel and Mike Bradley in this issue's feature, I can now see why. A system that resolves conflict for them wasn't the right approach. I never considered fighting as anything but annoying, so I didn't work on guiding them to acquire the tools to fight well. I never considered that working toward a healthy sibling relationship would help with all other relationships. Turns out, learning how to manage our children's sibling relationships might be worth the fight.

Meanwhile, at *Your Teen*, we're always looking for inspiration, so we decided to ask you to share your favorite quotes. Thank you! We received so many amazing submissions, which you can read on page 6. I take particular comfort in Albert Einstein's words: "Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new."

We are in our seventh year of publishing *Your Teen Magazine*. Despite "beyond our wildest dreams" accomplishments, we have to publicly fess up to an embarrassing fact. As we leaf through old copies of *Your Teen*, not one issue has the correct page numbers in the table of contents. Not. One. Issue. None of us can figure out what goes wrong. We labor over each proof, with special attention to the table of contents, and yet, the page numbers continue to be wrong.

As I write this letter, we will be attending to the same detail without any promise of correcting the problem. On the bright side, we are great role models for our kids, showing them that mistakes are inevitable and that it's in our power to correct them (except, maybe, for our table of contents!).

Lastly, the holidays are around the corner, so we rounded up our favorite product ideas from 2014 and present them in this issue's Holiday Gift Guide on page 18.

From our *Your Teen* family to yours, Happy Holidays—and enjoy the read!



FEATURED CONTRIBUTORS



Anna Quindlen

We've loved reading Anna Quindlen over the years, so this issue we're delighted to feature a Q&A (page 53) with the former columnist for the *New York Times* and *Newsweek*. Oh, and she's also the author of more than a dozen books, including, most recently, the *New York Times* bestseller *Still Life with Bread Crumbs*.



Laurence Steinberg

If you want a fascinating read about what's going on inside your teenager's head, pick up a copy of Dr. Laurence Steinberg's new book, *Age of Opportunity: Lessons from the New Science of Adolescence*. Your *Teen* caught up with Steinberg to find out what the research tells us about delaying experimentation with recreational drugs (and how to do it). Check it out on page 36.



Aline Weiller

We've loved her essays about her teenage boys, so this issue we invited Aline Weiler to write our terrific feature, "Sibling Rivalry: A Family Affair." If the adolescent bickering at your house is driving you, well, nuts, you won't want to miss it (page 30).



Wes Crenshaw

Dr. Wes Crenshaw is a psychologist and author of the just-released *I Always Want to Be Where I'm Not: Successful Living with ADHD and ADD*. He shares some of the strategies he's learned during more than two decades of working with adolescents with these conditions (page 28).

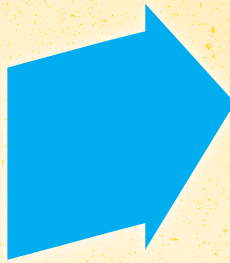


Michael Bradley

Dr. Michael Bradley is the author of several books, including *When Things Get Crazy With Your Teen: The Why, the How, and What to Do NOW*. This issue, he shares his practical advice on staunching—or, at least, surviving—sibling rivalry (page 33).

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Inspirational Quotes



Don't you just love a great quote? A quote can make us laugh. Or inspire us. Or impart some truth we'd like to remember always, but seem to forget until we read it again (and again). So, this issue we asked for your favorites.

PARENT ANSWERS

Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana —*Groucho Marx.*
Morty, Cherry Hill, NJ

Do unto others as you would want done to you.
Heidi, Palm Desert, CA

Our lives begin to end the moment we become silent about the things that matter. —*Martin Luther King, Jr.*
Amanda, Dayton, OH

How people treat you is their karma; how you react is yours. —*Dr. Wayne Dyer*
Rebecca, San Diego, CA

Even if you are on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there. —*Will Rogers*
Shannon, Portland, ME

Go placidly among the noise and haste and remember what peace there may be in silence.
—*Max Ehrmann*
Julia, Strongsville, OH

Life is uncertain, so start with dessert. —*My Dad*
Maura, Brooklyn, NY

When you make a mistake, there are only three things all people should ever do about it. Admit it.

Learn from it. Don't repeat it.
—*Paul Bear Bryant*
Liz, Fairfield, CT

If you don't ask, you'll never get.
Phil, Cooper City, FL

Following the crowd will lead you nowhere.
Deborah, Solon, OH

If you do not want to live an ordinary life, you must do extra ordinary things.
Michelle, Raleigh, NC

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.
—*Margaret Mead*
Suellen, Cleveland, OH

In the midst of winter, I found there was, within me, an invincible summer.
—*Albert Camus*
Adrienne, Orange, OH

Decisions should move you towards what you want, not just away from something you don't want.
Cathy, St. Louis, MO

With love, you have all the power.
—*Jeanne Smith*
Ann, Shaker Heights, OH

You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, "I have lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along."
—*Eleanor Roosevelt*
Nancy, Lincolnshire, IL

TEEN ANSWERS

When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I would not have a single bit of talent left and say, "I used everything you gave me."
—*Erma Bombeck*
Aviva, New York, NY

To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.
—*Ralph Waldo Emerson*
David, Washington, DC

There are only two things I know to be infinite: The universe, and human stupidity, and I'm not sure about the former.
—*Albert Einstein*
Jacob, New York, NY

You own everything that happened to you. Tell your stories. If people wanted you to write warmly about them, they should have behaved better.
—*Anne Lamott*
Hallie, St. Louis, MO

For beautiful eyes, look for the good in others; for beautiful lips, speak only words of kindness; and for poise, walk with the knowledge that you are never alone. —*Audrey Hepburn*
Vicki, Washington, DC

Be the change that you wish to see in the world.
—*Mahatma Gandhi*
Lily, Cleveland, OH

So be sure when you step. Step with care and great tact and remember that life's a great balancing act. —*Dr. Seuss*
Laura, Olney, MD

For every complex problem there is an answer that is clear, simple, and wrong. —*H.L. Mencken*
Ari, College Park, MD

The things you take for granted, someone else is praying for.
Erin, Chicago, IL

ONLINE AT YOURTEENMAG.COM

WHAT'S TRENDING

➔ Adolescence raises plenty of questions for parents, not least of which is: What's my role when it comes to how my adolescent is using technology? Hands off? Hands on? Or somewhere in between. Our free September webinar, **Digital Savvy Parenting: The Good, the Bad, the Ugly**, answered many of these questions. If you missed it, we've got a free video available at bit.ly/YTdigitalparent. And watch your inbox for details on our next webinar, **Cyberbullying, Gaming and Other Worries**.

KEEP UP with the latest from *Your Teen* on our social media channels. We're on **Facebook** (*Your Teen*), **Twitter** (@YourTeenMag) and **Google+** (+YourTeenMag).

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10 to 20 Parenting @10to20

Good stuff from @YourTeenMag > Things I Wish I Knew About High School ht.ly/ANK71

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Do You Really Want to Know?

Our round-up of the latest factoids about raising teenagers and more.

15% of middle-aged adults are providing financial support to both an aging parent and a child.

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43 On average, millennials check their phones **times per day.**

IBOTTA.COM



Only **20%** of **1,000** teens in Pennsylvania and New Jersey had their sexual history documented by their pediatrician during a routine checkup.

THE JOURNAL OF PEDIATRICS



87% of teens say they feel safer knowing that their family is aware of their location through a location sharing app.

LIFE360



ON A TYPICAL DAY,
17% OF WOMEN AND
10% OF MEN GO
GROCERY SHOPPING.

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Should I Call About the Party?



It's likely that your teen will party with their friends, but is it inevitable that you'll be the parent who always calls beforehand to check in? How do we balance teen independence with parental due diligence?

"We don't have to call every time," says Dr. Deborah Gilboa, a pediatrician in Pittsburgh and author of *Get the Behavior You Want, Without Being the Parent You Hate*. "But we always have to question — either our teen or ourselves or the parents at the party house — the who, what, and how of any situation that is likely to have substances and teens in abundance!"

Yes, your teen might protest, but don't apologize for taking your parenting responsibility seriously, Gilboa urges. You're working to ensure your child will be safe. If that requires a phone call to another parent, so be it. Just balance your involvement with your teen's need to mature by making her own decisions.

"Our teens need opportunities to earn our trust and clear guidelines about what breaks that trust," Gilboa says. "We don't have to know everything about a party; we just need to know how our teen will try to handle it if things go badly."

—R.B.



I HATE YOU!

Teens are known for being a little emotional at times and occasionally lashing out at their parents. It's fairly common for teens to whip out the ever hurtful, "I hate you!" or something else nasty. But, it's important to respond patiently and calmly and not take these moments personally.

"While teens may mean it in the moment, they're not in their right minds. They're flooded with emotions that they're learning to master," says Elizabeth Sullivan, a California marriage and family therapist.

Sullivan recommends turning the "I hate you!" outburst into a teachable moment to demonstrate how mature adults deal with difficult, emotional situations. Here are four responses to consider when reacting to your emotional child:

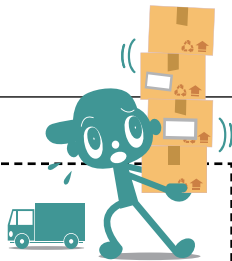
1. Acknowledge what they say with a simple "Ouch" or "Huh."
2. Breathe and calm down.
3. Say something like, "We can talk about this later when we've all calmed down" or "Okay, why don't you take a little time to yourself in your room and I will too."
4. Revisit the incident later and explain that their words really hurt you, and that it's important to remember that even when you get angry, you still love each other.

In all likelihood, this conversation won't change your teenager's perspective, but your reaction will model a healthier way of dealing with anger.

The worst thing you can do is respond on the same emotional and passionate level. Screaming at your teen won't get you anywhere.

"Trying to get them to be rational when they are upset is futile," Sullivan says. "But your kids do watch very closely what you do. So, use all your willpower to gain mastery over yourself, and don't lash out at them, as good as it might feel in that moment."

—R.B.



MOVE-OUT SKILLS 101:

WAYFINDING

A *Your Teen* reader recently shared a story with us. Her son missed the bus home from middle school, so he decided to walk. An hour or so later, her son calls her at work. He's halfway across town, several miles from home...completely lost. She was stupefied. "We've driven him back and forth from school dozens of times, yet he has no idea how to get home!"

Like many adolescents, our reader's son hadn't ever paid much—if any—attention to how to get places. And, parents don't necessarily think to teach their adolescents these wayfinding skills. Yet before we know it, our adolescents are asking for more independence to go places on their own.

Before your kids move out, they need to know where they're going. You can get started by:

1. Elevating the conversation to include directions. For example: "I'm taking a left onto Main Street" or "We're getting onto the green line." Also, note useful landmarks, like "Remember the church is where you turn right to get to soccer practice."
2. Asking your adolescent to navigate: "You tell me how to get to soccer practice and I'll follow your instructions."
3. Setting your teen loose to get places on her own, when you're ready of course.

Note: Some adolescents (and grown ups) are challenged in the wayfinding department. If your adolescent is a member of this club, then he'll need some additional tools. For example, if he wants to walk or bike to a friend's house across town, draw a simple map for the first few trips. Or, if he has a smartphone, show him how to use an app, like Google Maps (for walking, bicycling, or driving) or Transit (for public transportation).

Move Out Skills is Your Teen's regular series on teaching teenagers the practical skills they'll need to live away from home. Visit our website (yourteenmag.com) for the other articles in our Move Out series, including How to Do Laundry and First Aid Basics.

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Chef Jason Roberts

In support of farm to table

What's it like to grow up on a dairy farm? In New Zealand? Well, for starters, it teaches you a few things about where food comes from, which helps explain why chef Jason Roberts is so passionate about cooking with "real" ingredients.

He's got a vegetable garden in the backyard of his New Jersey home, shops at the farmer's market—and when his nine-year-old son, Hunter, asks for chicken nuggets, let's just say he gets the real deal.

"I'll say 'sure' and we'll march down to the supermarket, so he knows where his food comes from: a real chicken," says Roberts, who spent seven years as executive chef at Sydney's acclaimed Bistro Moncur.

So, it's no surprise that in his professional work, Roberts—who's also a

former cast member on ABC's popular *The Chew*—focuses on helping the rest of us eat this way too. His latest book, *Good Food—Fast!* is all about how to get a nutritious and tasty meal on the table (see the recipe below for an example).

"These days, it's important to be more conscious of the food we eat," Roberts told *Your Teen*. "Ignorance is not bliss."

On November 14-16, Chef Jason Roberts will emcee festivities in the Giant Eagle Market District Theater at the 9th Annual Fabulous Food Show, presented by Giant Eagle Market District at Cleveland's I-X Center. Get your tickets at fabulousfoodshow.com.

Stir-fried Chicken with Baby Corn & Basil

"I love cooking with a wok, its quick and easy one pot cooking at its best, a perfect mid week meal for that crazy lifestyle!"
Serve and eat this one straightaway. Serves 2.

INGREDIENTS:

2 tbsp. olive oil
8 oz chicken thigh fillets, sliced
3 long red chilis, seeds removed and finely sliced
1 clove garlic, finely sliced
1 inch knob of ginger, finely sliced
2 tbsp. oyster sauce
1 tbsp. fish sauce
1 tbsp. brown sugar
¼ cup chicken stock (or water)
7 oz baby corn
½ cup basil leaves (optional)
1 lime

DIRECTIONS:

Heat oil in a wok until just smoking.

Add chicken and stir-fry until golden. Pour off any excess oil then toss in chili, garlic and ginger. Stir-fry for 30 seconds, add the stock, oyster and fish sauces, sugar and baby corn. Cook for an additional 30 seconds, finishing with the fresh basil and a squeeze of lime.

Spoon onto a serving plate accompanied with a bowl of steamed rice.





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Celebrating the Holidays with Cancer in the Family

For teenagers whose parents have cancer, it can be difficult to feel merry around the holidays. Not only are these teenagers worried about their parents' health, they're mourning the loss of the "normal" holiday experience they've always known.

"It's important for these families to talk about the holidays in advance, in particular what's going to make it meaningful," ex-

plains Kathy Maxwell of Northeast Ohio's The Gathering Place, which offers a variety of support services for families dealing with cancer. "When cancer is in the family, it's an opportunity for deepening experiences."

Start by talking about how preparing for the holidays may be different this year. "In some families, teenagers may be called upon to help in ways they haven't had to do before," Maxwell ex-

plains. "Also, it's okay to acknowledge that it's different, and it might bring some disappointment."

Then explore, with your teenager, how to make the season special. "Often, families find it's about receiving in a different way than they have in the past. That can include non-material ways that help families express how much they care about each other."

Adds Maxwell: "When you have cancer in the family, you do want to celebrate what you have right here, right now."

During December, The Gathering Place will offer several opportunities for families to celebrate together, including a holiday party on December 12. The festivities will include music and refreshments. For more information, visit The Gathering Place's website at touchedbycancer.org.

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Harvest Kale Salad

Kale is the rage. And now Sweet Melissa's offers a Harvest Kale Salad recipe that incorporates this super food with delicious toppings and a fall maple syrup dressing. Add a side of soup, and you have the perfect fall meal.

INGREDIENTS:

For the Salad

2 bunches cleaned and trimmed baby kale
1 cup fine shredded red cabbage
2 tbsp. pecans
1 honey crisp apple thinly sliced
1/4 cup crumbled bleu cheese
1/2 cup chopped blanched green beans

Maple Soy Vinaigrette

In a ball jar add the following ingredients:

1/2 cup olive oil
1/4 cup soy sauce
1/4 cup maple syrup
2 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
2 tbsp. honey
2 tbsp. dijon mustard
1 clove garlic finely chopped
Pinch salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS:

Toss ingredients with 4 oz of Maple Soy Vinaigrette

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“Everyone knows the overnight success stories, but for most people, it isn’t as easy as that, so don’t give up.”

Teen Actor Bailee Madison Shares Advice



HELGA ESTEB / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Chances are, you first saw Bailee Madison on the big screen in the 2007 hit, *Bridge to Terabithia*, which was based on the popular children’s novel by Katherine Paterson. Since then the 15-year-old actress and Florida native has worked with directors like Adam Sandler and Guillermo Del Toro and, most recently, starred in the popular ABC Family drama, *The Fosters*.

Is it hard to be a “normal” teenager and a Hollywood actress?

Definitely not. I have my best friends from my elementary school in Florida. I was very young when I started, and so it was important to my mom and my whole family to make sure my life had roots and that I was a kid and that I was grounded. Even when I was in Florida for a week, I would go to school, put on my uniform, pack my lunchbox. My involvement in the industry is like an after-school activity for other kids. My mom always says that the moment I

change, the U-Haul truck is packed. It sounds like a joke but she means it.

Where do you go to school now?

I have been homeschooled since middle school. When I’m on set, I have a tutor for at least 3-1/2 hours a day. When I’m not working I study with a tutor.

How do you pick your roles?

It’s a family affair. My sister reads the script first, then it goes to my mom, and if they both like it, then I read it. A lot of scripts are quick to take you from a 15-year-old

to a 17-year-old overnight. So, we say “no” more than we say “yes.” We’re selective and we try to keep things age appropriate. We approach every script that way and always have.

How do you handle rejection?

In this business, you will definitely be rejected. It’s just the way it works. I get support, in the good times and the bad times, from my family and my faith. God has a plan, and I have to look at the bright side. Along the road, maybe days or weeks, I will see what the plan is. People who love and care for

me pick me up. This is life and you learn from every single scenario.

What’s your advice for other teenagers who’d like to act?

Make sure that you really love it. It’s not just a sacrifice for you. It’s a sacrifice for your whole family. Start off in a school play, and see if you really love it. Start making YouTube videos. Everyone knows the overnight success stories, but for most people, it isn’t as easy as that, so don’t give up. Make sure you have good people around you, family and friends who support you. ■

Just Listen by Sarah Dessen

Sarah Dessen's *Just Listen*...it's complicated, say our reviewers, but in the best possible way.

PARENT REVIEW

By **Dan Coyle**

When I opened *Just Listen*, I set my cheesy-early-warning system to high alert because it wasn't the kind of book I normally read. I'm happy to report that I was completely wrong. The author, Sarah Dessen, created a worthwhile read by taking us inside the mind and heart of an eloquent, imperfect, struggling teenager, all without giving into easy, obvious answers. Instead, she honestly and painfully wrestles with the Big Questions of Life: How do you establish your identity? How do you handle problems with friends and family? How do you tell uncomfortable truths to yourself and the world?

Adding up all the big issues that Annabel encounters makes *Just Listen* sound like a laundry list of today's hot-button topics. Fortunately, Dessen handles each with a sure and understated touch—all told through Annabel's voice. So, each topic reads like a natu-

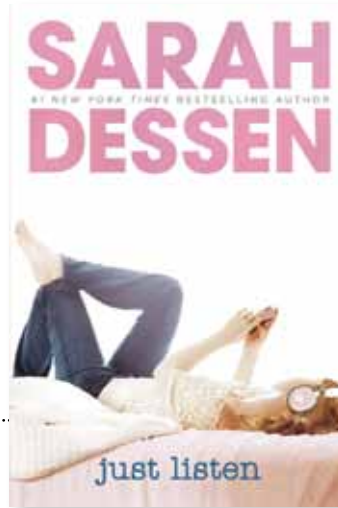
ral extension of normal life. Which is, in fact, how they are.

Of all the various plotlines in the book, I particularly enjoyed the story of Annabel's relationship with Owen Armstrong—the hulking, misunderstood kid obsessed with music. Owen is basically Heathcliff with an iPod and is compelling for the same reasons: he's dark, slightly dangerous, and complicated. Moreover, he challenges Annabel's worldview by exposing her to the power of music and big ideas. While the depth of Owen's awesomeness occasionally stretches beyond belief (can any teenager be quite that nurturing and wise?), the arc of their relationship formed the real heart of the book for me.

What I liked most, however, was the way the book sparked conversations in our family. (We have one son and three daughters.) I think this was fueled by the book's approachability, mixing its heavier issues with lighter, sweeter stuff like modeling and friend drama. It's a solid recipe, and one that books (as opposed to movies or TV) are uniquely suited to deliver.

All in all, reading this book taught me three things: 1) I should read more young adult fiction; 2) I need to remember how complicated growing up can be; 3) Books like this can create a good space to deal with stuff that's normally hard to talk about.

Dan Coyle is author of The Talent Code.



TEEN REVIEW

By **Kaitlin Coyle**

Just Listen surprised me. In roughly three and a half minutes, my brain shifted from “A model, a petty best friend, and a hunky lover boy? Sounds cheesy,” to “Wow. This is fantastic.” I picked up the book at 8:00 a.m. and finished it by lunch. Like all thrilling tales, *Just Listen* sucked me in and never let me go. I was never bored. My mind never wandered.

In other words, it's a fast read.

Anyone can connect with the main character, Annabel. She's anyone's best friend: confused, affectionate and exasperating. I spent half the book cheering her on and the other half with my head in my lap.

Even more importantly, the author, Sarah Dessen, wrestles with heavy issues—without making them seem like heavy issues and without breaking character. She never preaches. She never sounds like a superior adult. Instead, she maintains the identity of a teenage girl by riding the emotional roller coaster to the end.


One flaw: it's not a fairytale. In fairytales, the bad guys lose, the good guys win, the prince marries the princess, and everyone lives happily ever after. In fairytales, there's closure. *Just Listen*, despite resolving its most pressing conflicts, leaves me wondering. “What happens with her ex-best friend?” “Does that guy go to jail?” “Does everything go back to normal?”

But, I took away two important lessons:

Lesson #1: What you see isn't necessarily what you get. From page one, Annabel is labeled as “the girl who has everything.” A loving family, a modeling career, cool clothes—what more could a girl want? As it turns out, it's really “almost everything.” Harsh realities haunt her seemingly plastic world.

Lesson #2: Good old regular normal boring life is actually pretty good.

Katie is spending the first semester of her junior year at The Mountain School in Vermont.



What happened to my little guy, who used to be so nice?
Is this mono? Is he just tired? Is this dandruff? Is this lice?
Are they giving too much homework? Is she behind in school?
Should I approach a bully's parents?
What's just teasing and what's cruel?
Is he gifted? Is he stunted? Do kids ever get depressed?
Why does he take half hour showers?
Is this how a kid should dress?
Is she on the phone too much? Is it too early for "the talk?"
Can I just walk into her room? Or do I have to knock?
Just how long does puberty last? Can't we speed this up?
Or make it stop? Or make it easy?
Should she be wearing all this makeup?
Is it bad that he won't talk to me? And when he does it's obscene?
Should I send her off to boarding school? Or is she just being a teen?
Rated R movies? PG-13? Too many video games?
What's the best way to relate to him? Should he use my first name?
Why can't she make any friends? Does she have low self-esteem?
Should I go talk to her or should I let her come to me?
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HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

We've made a list—and checked it twice—of our favorite holiday gifts for your teenager or anyone else on your list.

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SKINIT

Your Teen's Lisa Golovan loves the Skinit custom iPhone case. Just upload a photo to Skinit's web-site, add whatever customization you'd like, and, voila, you're done. "It was so easy," says Golovan. "The case is sturdy and I've gotten tons of compliments!" **Skinit.com**



ROCK SAUCE

Got sports? Meet Rock Sauce. It's a topical pain reliever that helps soothe sore muscles and that's also



designed to be used with today's popular kinesiology tapes. *Your Teen's* Eca Taylor gave it a whirl after a recent workout. "I felt like

I was at a spa with my legs wrapped in hot towels," she says. "It was amazing." **RockTape.com**

SOULFUL ESSENCE YOGA BLISS



"I was a little nervous about spraying my mat before class, but I took a deep (not so cleansing) breath and pushed the spray top," says *Your Teen* proofreader Jessica Semel. "The spray had a lovely scent, did not leave any sticky residue on the mat, and did not overpower

me when my head was down for child's pose or downward dog." **SoulfulEssence.com**

DOT.MINE DAY PLANNER

We love our gadgets, but sometimes good old-fashioned paper does it best. That's how *Your Teen's* Mindy Gallagher feels about her new 2015 calendar from May Designs. "I love it. I can read it without my glasses and don't have to worry about a low battery. It's got a monthly and weekly calendar, with plenty of room for writing, plus it's attractive and spiral bound so it lays flat."

TimeMine.com



MICROTOUCH MAX



Fun, easy to use, and practical. What more can we say about the Microtouch Max, an all-in-one trimmer for the young man living under your roof. "I like gadgets and this is a handy one that lets me take care of business quickly," says Ethan Silverman, son of *Your Teen's* Stephanie Silverman. "Plus, the results are good." **MicroTouchMax.com**





GEEK CHIC

Because teenagers love gadgets



UWATER G5 MP3/ FM RADIO PLAYER

A music player that attaches to your goggles. Now that's cool. Load up the UWater G5 with your own tunes or listen to your favorite FM radio station (hello, NPR fans). "I liked it a lot," says Jamie Gallagher, who swims for Georgetown University. "It made swimming laps a lot more enjoyable." GearedToBeFit.com



CANZ 808

Check out this fun, portable (and colorful!) way for your favorite tween to listen to music with any Bluetooth-enabled device. "The speaker had good sound and it is a great value for the price," says *Your Teen's* Eca Taylor. "Perfect for a tween who is just starting to try out new gadgets without a big price tag." 808Audio.com



PELICAN PROGEAR VAULT SERIES

It's safe to say that teenagers can sometimes be less than careful when it comes to their electronic devices. If that sounds familiar, then this iPad Air case belongs on your holiday shopping list (especially if there's an iPad Air there already). "It is the ultimate in protection for an expensive device," says *Your Teen's* Mike Murray. "Plus, it's good looking with an industrial, hip vibe." Best of all, if your teenager manages to break the device while it's in this case, Pelican will replace it. Pelican-Case.com

ARMPocket ARMBAND

Armpocket is the perfect armband for exercising. Just strap your iPhone into the Armpocket, attach your headphones and off you or your teenager will go. Says *Your Teen's* Mindy Gallagher: "My son had a great workout and I'm loving that the band is machine washable." ArmPocket.com



SAFESPACE PORTABLE SAFE

MasterLock's SafeSpace was designed for *Your Teen's* Stephanie Silverman's son Ethan. He is a guy who takes his privacy seriously. "Now, I can lock up my favorite stuff." And keep them safe from prying parents. MasterLock.com





GOODIES GALORE

Sweeten up your holiday



MRS. PRINDABLE'S GOURMET APPLES

The team at *Your Teen* rarely agrees on anything. Yet, everyone loved Mrs. Prindable's Gourmet Apples. "They were so beautiful, we hesitated to take a bite. But we did and the taste did not disappoint. Delicious," says editor Susan Borison. A perfect gift for the host and hostess of all those holiday gatherings on your calendar. MrsPrindables.com

KETTLEPOP

What's a holiday party without a few pounds (or more) of caramel popcorn or cheese popcorn (or best of all, both together... seriously, try it). *Your Teen* staffer Mindy Gallagher loves popcorn. KettlePop, which you can order online, is her favorite. "My 17-year-old son, his girlfriend, and I tried it, and let's just say, it didn't last long. We couldn't stop eating it!" KettlePop.com



MAIN STREET CUPCAKES

What's a holiday without a cupcake, right? The lucky ladies who got to sample a recent batch of Main Street Cupcakes can't gush enough. The Blue Christmas, which is filled with blueberries. "Heaven in a bite!" says *Your Teen's* Holly Kaye. "This is the perfect gift for teachers, friends, or family." Other holiday-themed treats include Christmas Coconut Crème, Iced Gingerbread, and Candy Cane. MainStreetCupcakes.com

SOULFULLY SWEET



A healthier cookie? Sure. But one that also tastes great? Yep. Soulfully Sweet Cookies are organic, wheat free, non-GMO, and gluten free, and scrumptious. In fact, we can't rave enough about them. More please! SoulfullySweetTreats.com



MAGNOLIA BAKERY CARE PACKAGE

Add some holiday cheer anytime of the year by sending your college student a care package from New York City's Magnolia Bakery. The set includes a half dozen each of the bakery's popular chocolate chunk brownies, double fudge brownies, chocolate chunk cookies, and peanut butter cookies. Yum. MagnoliaBakery.com

TWENTY-4 ZEN GRANOLA

"OMG! Yum!," gushes *Your Teen's* Stephanie Silverman about Twenty 4 Zen's granola. "The Salty Caramel Chocolate Chunk granola was so good and fresh, I thought nothing could top it. Then I tried the Bananas Foster granola and, well, it's perfect." What's more, this granola—with lots of healthy ingredients, of course—is specially made for "those who seek nirvana," says Twenty-4 Zen. Um, we'll take some of that. Twenty4Zen.com





THE BEST OF ALL THE REST

A year's worth of staff favorites

SONGBIRD PORTABLE RADIO

Hot pink leatherette. A volume dial that goes past 11 (for all you *Spinal Tap* fans). And that's just two of the many fab things about the retro-style Crosley Portable AM/FM Radio, says *Your Teen* photographer Beth Segal. Throw in some batteries and take it to your next Beach Blanket Bingo party or plug it in at home and wake up to the built-in alarm clock playing your fave oldies station ... or Spotify, using the external audio device hook-up. The reception and sound are retro too, but that's just part of the fun, especially when you get to fine tune with the real cool antenna.

CrosleyRadio.com



PERSONALIZED NECKLACES BY HEART ON YOUR WRIST

Psst, teenagers and dads. Want to score some serious points with mom? Head on over to Heart On Your Wrist and order up one of the company's personalized mother's necklaces. "It is a great piece to wear with everything," says *Your Teen*'s Stephanie Silverman. "Trust me, the mom in your life will love it."

HeartOnYourWrist.com

FASHIONABLE SCARVES

Keep your favorite gal warm this winter with this adorable microfibre wool blend scarf. "It met all my requirements for softness. You could hardly tell you had anything on. The length was good—not too long, not too short. I had black on when I wore it and it really made the orange and grey colors in the scarf pop," says a *Your Teen* reader.

RockFlowerPaper.com

SLIM-SATION PANTS

You could say *Your Teen*'s Stephanie Silverman and Sue Borison are having a *Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants* moment with SlimSation's new line of pants. "We love these pants. They're comfortable and fit really well," says Sue. "And we both look great when we're leaving the room," adds Stephanie. Gotcha.

Slimsation.com





GREEN TEEN COOKBOOK

Got an eco-conscious teenager? *The Green Teen Cookbook* from Zest Books is loaded with 70-plus recipes, plus plenty of information on what it means to eat in an environmentally sustainable way (you'll even learn what freeganism is). "My niece, who's new to the kitchen, chose the Chicken with Ginger and Broccoli recipe," says *Your Teen's* Holly Kaye. "We had fun heading to the market together to pick out seasonal broccoli and organic chicken, as well as farm fresh eggs. With just a little guidance from me, the results were fantastic." ZestBooks.net

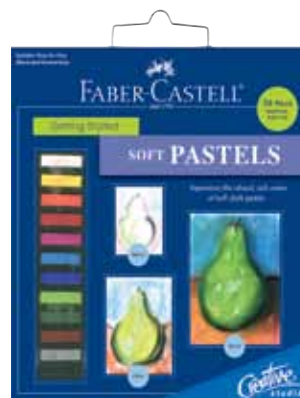


DOG TAG ART

Of course, you'll need a gift for Fido too. So, how about a new, one-of-a-kind dog tag? "I like how the tag has all of the necessary information and a customized picture," says *Your Teen's* Stephanie Silverman's son, Ethan, who counts his dog Moxie among his closest pals. "Moxie looks pretty cute wearing the tag too." DogTagArt.com

GETTING STARTED ART SETS

If you've got a budding artist in the house, here's an easy, reasonably priced gift that's sure to please: Faber Castell's Getting Started Art Sets. The sets come in six versions, including Comic Illustration and Pastels. *Your Teen's* Diana Simeon handed a couple to her tween. "I didn't see her for the rest of the day," she jokes. "I'll be putting a few of these under the tree this year." FaberCastell.com

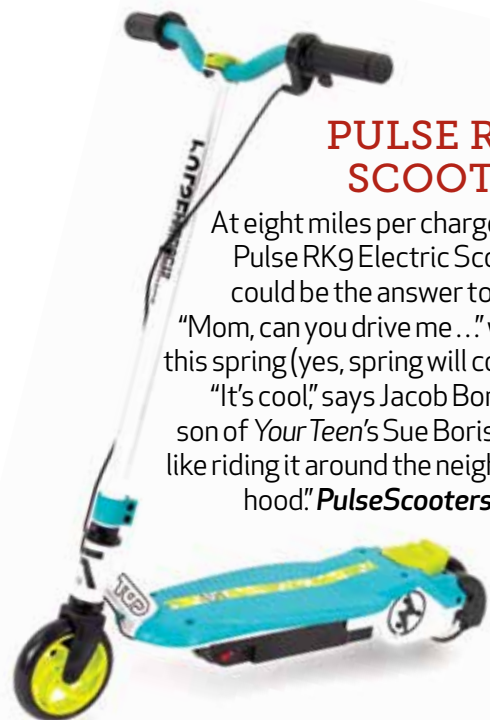


MOTOROLA TALKABOUT

Your Teen's Susan Borison's husband and son (lovingly known as Phil and Luke from *Modern Family*) love the Motorola Talkabout MT350R Radios. With a 35-mile range, flashlight and weather channel, the fun/trouble is endless. While they will be great for their intended purpose—use when out of cell phone range camping, hiking, etc.—the radios open up ample backyard adventure. MotorolaSolutions.com

PULSE RK9 SCOOTER

At eight miles per charge, the Pulse RK9 Electric Scooter could be the answer to your "Mom, can you drive me..." woes this spring (yes, spring will come). "It's cool," says Jacob Borison, son of *Your Teen's* Sue Borison. "I like riding it around the neighborhood." PulseScooters.com



November 21-23



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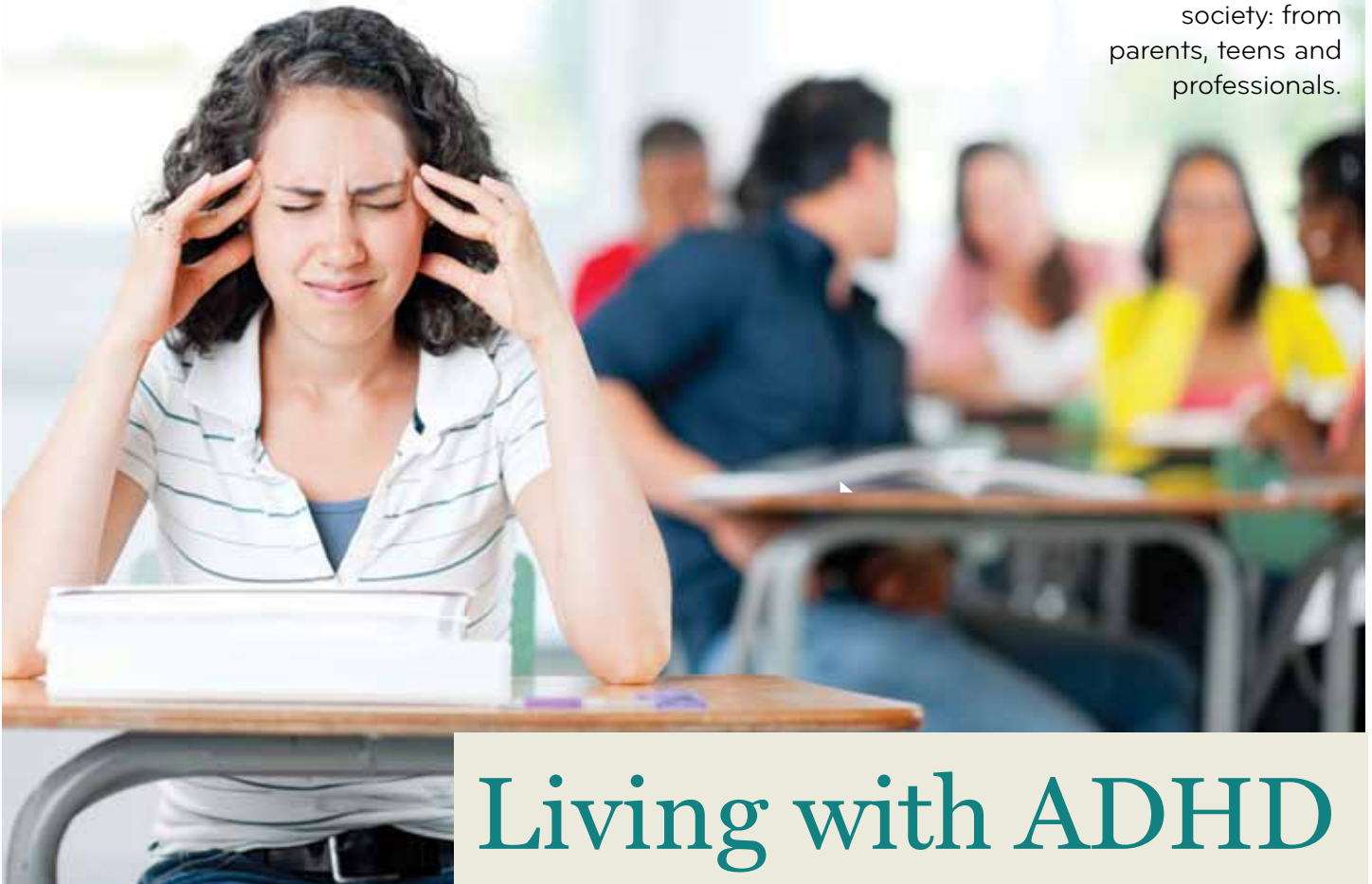


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Living with ADHD

Parent 1

By Meg Foglietti



Though I was aware of my son's attention difficulties from the time he was in early preschool, it wasn't until after first grade that he was formally diagnosed with ADD. I have a love/hate relationship with this label, but I was pleased that we'd identified what was going on in his little seven-year-old brain so that we could work to better direct his focus. I did, and still do, take issue with the word, "disorder," in the description of ADD/ADHD, as it implies a mental "problem" rather than a manageable difficulty.

This is my son's senior year of high school, and it's been an interesting

roller coaster ride. As is the case with many children with ADD/ADHD, my son is an intelligent, creative, and critical thinker. He's also sometimes forgetful and out-of-step with what's going on around him. As a child, he couldn't focus on something of little importance (to him) for more than 10 minutes; yet, a box of Legos or a Harry Potter book captured his full attention for hours. Needless to say, his selective attention span posed an issue in the classroom.

Various studies estimate that 12 to 30 percent of children with ADD/ADHD have coexisting conditions, varying from sleeping difficulties to learning differences, such as dyslexia or dysgraphia. My son has dysgraphia, a processing glitch that makes writing a challenge, requiring greater effort and time than a traditional student. It took him greater time and effort to accomplish the same writing tasks as

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other students, so he fell behind in class.

Many exceptional teachers in my son's lower and middle school years took the time to understand him and his learning differences in order to make the most of his many gifts. Other teachers, unfortunately, lacked understanding, concern, or patience for his divergent intellect, which created an atmosphere that progressively whittled away his self-confidence.

After failed trials of most ADHD medicines on the market, years of out-of-pocket tutoring and an unsuccessful move to a prestigious private middle school, we enrolled him in his current high school as a freshman. Here, he experienced a learning environment with peers with similar challenges. The teachers recognized their students' individual strengths and weaknesses and addressed their distinct learning styles by adapting their lessons to foster the understanding and productivity of the entire class.

My son will graduate this year, with honors, but more importantly, with the knowledge, organizational skills, and self-confidence he needs to thrive in college and life. Our roller coaster ride is hardly over; this is life, but the view from here looks incredibly positive!

Meg Foglietti is the parent of Lawrence School senior, Julian Foglietti.

Teen 1

By Julian Foglietti



By the time I was in first grade, my family realized I was different than the

other kids. I had trouble concentrating and staying quiet. Further testing diagnosed me with ADD.

We started looking for ways to help me cope and for a year I was able to manage pretty well. By the time second grade came around however, we realized that I needed medication to help me cope, even though my teacher was understanding and supportive. Focusing was still really hard and I continued to talk out and be off task a lot.

I began taking the medication, and I went from being one of the most talkative kids in school, to someone who hardly talked at all. Very soon, I realized that my medication and struggles in school were sending me into a deep depression that would continue on throughout school.

By the time fifth grade came around my parents decided that a change needed to be made. At the time, I thought switching schools would help because the classes would be more challenging academically. Maybe the problem was that I was bored. My parents, however, felt that the switch would be helpful because the classes would be much smaller and I would get more personalized

attention. I switched in sixth grade, but the heavy homework, harsh teachers and severe bullying continued to plague my life.

My depression worsened, and I soon fell into a very deep slump. By the end of eighth grade, I felt like I was never going to get back up.

Earlier that year, my mom had told me about Lawrence School, a school that specialized in helping students like me, who were smart but had some difficulties learning. Tired from the pains of my old school, I decided to make the switch. It felt surreal—I didn't have many friends, but it was still difficult to leave a school that was so familiar to me.

I started my new school in the fall of 2011. One of the first students I met asked me straight out, "So, why are you here?" For the first time in my school career, I didn't feel like I had to hide who I was. I did not have to pretend that everything was fine or that I was more successful in classes than I was. For the first time, I knew I was somewhere with kids who'd had the same experiences that I'd had. I finally had something in common with the other kids.

I'd never felt comfortable at school. I never fit in – kids didn't like me, I wasn't good at sports and I struggled in

classes. Now that's all changed and I'm about to graduate with honors.

I think that very few people in the world are as focused on proving themselves as kids with learning differences. We persevere when others would probably give up. We're not always accepted for who we are, which forces us to work harder and prove that we are not all that different from everyone else. And while that might seem unfair, all that hard work makes us better people. It's impossible to break us – we will always rise to the challenge before us, and in the right learning environment, we will do better than anyone thought possible.

Julian Foglietti is a senior at Lawrence School in Sagamore Hills, Ohio.

Teen 2

By Heather Brandenburg



Growing up, I used to think I was stupid. I didn't know why I could never

understand what my teachers were teaching in class, why I could never remember

I think that very few people in the world are as focused on proving themselves as kids with learning differences. We persevere when others would probably give up.

If you have a teen with ADD or ADHD, you'll generally find him or her falling into one of three categories: optimistic, terrified, or lost.

anything I was supposed to be doing, or why I was the weird girl who couldn't hold an appropriate conversation. I spent 18 years of my life in a constant fog of confusion, and no one but me had any clue.

Before I was diagnosed with ADD my freshman year of college, I had terrible anxiety that counter-balanced my ADD symptoms. I knew I would forget everything, so I wrote it all down on post-it notes. I color coded the notes and hung them all over my desk as constant reminders. I knew it took me a long time to grasp concepts or finish a reading, so I set aside multiple hours in the day to teach myself calculus or French.

My anxiety got me through the high school workload. I still thought I was stupid, but I'd figured out the work around. But, my first semester of college turned that assurance upside down. I found myself forgetting entire lectures. I knew I went to class, but I couldn't even remember being in the classroom. My notes looked like brand new material. I spent the semester teaching myself all the material for my class. I worked my butt off to keep up with my course load, but the amount of work I put in didn't translate into good grades.

Finally, I sought help. I was diagnosed with ADD my freshman year of college, and life hasn't been the same since. I began seeing a therapist who helped me understand how differently

my brain works and how to manage it.

My ADD medicine lifted the cloud from my brain; I can now see in color. I've realized that I'm not stupid at all. I'm actually quite smart. My ambition and confidence has increased ten-fold now that I know my capabilities. The nightmare I used to call 'college' is now a dream come true.

In the three years since my diagnosis, I've worked with my therapist to understand the world of ADD and my place in it, and that has made all the difference. I could have stopped at the medication, but I wanted to know why and how I was different and how to use that to my advantage. I wanted to learn how to rely on myself, and not just my medicine, to get by. Three years down the road, I can now see the world in color, with or without my medicine, and all because I made an effort to understand instead of simply treat.

Heather is a senior at the University of Kansas studying exercise science.

Professional

By Dr. Wes Crenshaw



If you have a teen with ADD or ADHD, you'll generally find him or her falling into one of three categories: optimistic, terrified, or lost. For parents, the category may not

be obvious, but when I ask teens, most can easily identify which one they are.

Optimistic teens are a bit too ready to get on with life. Research argues that they shouldn't leave home at 18, but they can't wait to get those darn parents out of their hair. These kids have overdeveloped yearnings for freedom and underdeveloped skills of independence. They don't yet realize that freedom isn't free and is impossible to achieve without true independence. They may discount the importance of further education or attempt it half-heartedly. Many don't consider that parents aren't interested in financing endless wandering. In severe cases, these kids face school or career failure, financial ruin, and sometimes, criminal behavior—all before they sober up figuratively and often, literally.

Terrified teens lean the opposite direction. They're a little too realistic. Keenly aware of their shortcomings, they avoid leaving home or try it for a year before moving back into their parents' basement. They refuse or self-sabotage independence, even avoiding driving or working. Parents find them annoyingly satisfied with their situations and unmotivated to strive for anything greater.

Lost teens are confused by

their situation and options in life. They lack the confidence of optimism and the driving energy of worry, easily becoming depressed and defeated. They may go back and forth from living at home to living independently. When asked to develop a simple plan, they struggle, because they genuinely can't see themselves anywhere doing anything. In worst-case scenarios, they imagine living in communes or becoming homeless as good alternatives, or having babies at a young age to extend family support.

Successful ADHD/ADD teens have a hopeful perspective—the will and the way to make it in life. Follow these steps to help your teen get organized and get on the right path:

- **Brainstorm with a mentor.**

This may be hard on your teen's ego, because only a few ideas will add up. But it's easier for someone else to critique a plan than the teen.

- **Get Real.**

Teens with ADHD/ADD idealize fun goals, like becoming a video game designer or winning *The Voice*. That happens, but not often. Help teens set an achievable goal while striving for their passion on the side.

- **Do A Cost-Benefit Analysis.**

Have teens list reasons to try something on one side of a page and reasons not to on the other. Assign each a weight and tally the results. If a teen is honest, the numbers rarely lie.

- **Make Choices Authentic.**

Real choices require at least two valid options, both deserving serious consideration. For example, don't send a teen to college simply because he or she doesn't know what else to do. That's not a real choice.

- **Don't Overcomplicate Decisions.**

Some teens imagine more choices than really exist just to avoid decision-making. Most choices can be reduced to a series of yes/no questions.

- **Know Your Limits.**

It's easy for teens to bite off more than they can chew, from events in a planner to projects at work or school. That sets teens up to fail.

- **Pace Yourself.**

Suggest achievable short-term objectives and time-limited breaks. It's better to be the tortoise than the hare.

- **Never Make Life-Altering Decisions While Altered.**

Substance abuse does not promote good choices. Parents should especially emphasize this when discussing dating.

- **Document Your Success.**

Take pictures of achieved goals and look back at them when your teen feels hopeless. Make and have your teen check off a list until the goal is reached, then bask in its glory, a reminder that he or she can finish something.

It's hard for teenagers with ADHD/ADD to feel hopeful when others are growing up, making life decisions, taking calculated risks, and succeeding, while they're not. But, if teens follow this list they'll find hope is something you do, not something you feel.

Wes Crenshaw, Ph.D., is Board Certified in Couples and Family Psychology by the American Board of Professional Psychology. He is a newspaper columnist and author of I Always Want to Be Where I'm Not: Successful Living with ADD and ADHD, available from Amazon.com. Learn more about his work at www.dr-wes.com.

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SIBLING RIVALRY

A Family Affair

BY ALINE WEILLER | PHOTOS BY BETH SEGAL

Whether it's listening to your adolescents argue over what to watch on television or dealing with incalculable cries of "It's not fair!" sibling rivalry can drive even the most even-keeled parents crazy. This issue, we tackle the rivalry head-on and learn how to (sometimes) put an end to it—or, at least, to understand it.

Sibling rivalry is born with a second child. The arrival of a new baby forever changes the family dynamic, and you can catch its first glimpses when the older child steals the newborn's toys or misbehaves while you nurse the baby.

Tension between siblings is stressful, yes, but perfectly normal. "Sibling rivalry is mislabeled, and needs to be re-framed," explains Dr. Pamela Varaday, the Santa Monica-based clinical psychologist and author of *15 Minutes to Sibling Harmony*. "It's not inherently bad, but rather, is rooted in biology. Children have competing needs and fight over resources, namely, their parents."

Indeed, children of all ages vie for their parents' attention (and affection). Firstborns, especially, scramble to keep their lost position in the spotlight. They experience a grief of sorts—a feeling that they're no longer enough to sustain the parents' love.

"Parents often seem surprised at the intensity of the older child's reaction to a new brother or sister and question how to discipline or manage them. This behavior should be accepted as normal. Similarly, the development of sibling bickering should be anticipated," notes Janet Woodward, a Connecticut-based pediatrician with 30 years of experience.

THEN COMES PUBERTY...

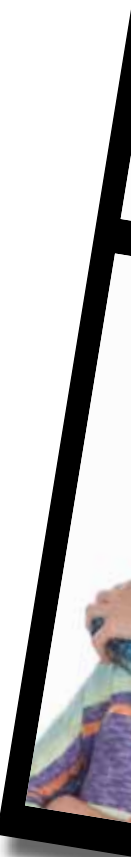
For many parents, the sibling rivalry of childhood is manageable. But when puberty arrives, that can change.

"Little kids will say, 'You're a poopy head,' or 'You're stupid,' or something like that, and parents will kind of chuckle," says Dr. Mike Bradley, a psychologist and author of *When Things Get Crazy With Your Teen: The Why, the How, and What to Do NOW*. "But when they hit the teen years and start dropping the F-bomb or saying other terrible things, the parents go on red alert, thinking their kids hate each other." (See our Q&A with Bradley on page 33.)

But again, it's normal. Your teens are just regular teenagers clashing with siblings over the same reasons as when they were younger. They are competing for the common pool of privileges, goods, or love. It just sounds a lot harsher.

Still, some additional factors are in play, too, like adolescent development. "Teens are forming their own identities and want to be unique," Varaday explains. "Sibling rivalry is especially apparent between kids of the same gender and close in age."

Teens are also especially sensitive to how much parental attention they're getting (or not getting).





As they individuate, they strive for attention, even if it's negative.

"Teens still crave attention, though they pretend they don't need you. My biggest complaint from teenagers is that their parents don't seem to show interest in them," Varaday adds.

They'll argue over fairness—computer time, television selections, and car usage—and compare academic or athletic prowess. Competition isn't all bad; it's a sign that they're asserting themselves, rather than acquiescing. But, it's hard to endure repetitive spats.

HOW TO HELP

The reality? Kids fight. A parent's challenge is to recognize the triggers, then foster attitudes and behaviors that bring noteworthy change. Try these five strategies from our experts:

1. Map out some ground rules—and stick to them. You should never tolerate bullying and physical abuse, nor should you expect squabbles to cease entirely. But you can set expectations for behavior before, during, and after the conflict. Establish those boundaries.

"Typical fights in our house center around control—over the video game console or a certain seat in the car. We create a schedule where the kids take turns for certain privileges and have set time limits," says Sally Haskovec, a Virginia mother of three—two boys, 12 and 13, and a 15-year-old daughter.

2. Model the ground rules. Excessive arguing, either between your teens and you, or even your spouse and you, can exacerbate sibling disputes. Your children will model your behavior, and adolescents will fight more in families where verbal sparring is the acceptable way to resolve conflict.

"Yelling does not work," Woodward stresses.

Instead, develop a family philosophy on how members treat each other, where kindness—and appropriate ways

of resolving conflict—rule. This may seem like a dated throwback to the Brady Bunch, but instilling a true sense of family pride can help to build relationships.

"Our kids make snarky comments about each other's schools, course loads, and GPAs. It's never truly mean spirited, but rather just about challenging each other to try harder. We've taught them, instead, to support each other by attending a game or awards ceremony and celebrating the other's accomplishments," says Christopher Garcia, parent of a 15-year-old son and 18-year-old daughter in Houston.

Also, don't hesitate to talk about your teenagers' ill-treatment of each other, in terms of this philosophy, adds Cleveland-based parenting coach, Amy Speidel. "For example, 'You know what, I was listening to how you were speaking, and you were being rude. In this family we speak kindly to each other.'"

3. Offer individual attention. Part of sibling rivalry comes from vying for parental attention. Help ease that by carving out individual time with each child to do activities he likes. Make it official by adding these "dates" to the calendar. And also use everyday tasks—like running errands on the weekend—to grab some one-on-one time with your teens. Finally, make an effort to note good behavior and acknowledge it with praise. "By building self-esteem in each teen, siblings may not need to compete or jostle as much with each other," Woodward notes.

4. Step in carefully. When you wade into your adolescents' arguments, it's crucial to avoid favoritism, comparisons, and always expecting the older child to be the mature one. "The oldest is actually the most vulnerable as they've suffered a loss of status," Varaday says. "It's best to step in, without taking sides, and narrate the situation. Have the teens problem solve and set a joint consequence if they don't work it out."

But, Speidel says, parents should also

recognize that their adolescents may not actually possess the skill set to work out every problem on their own. "When you say, 'You know what? You are old enough to work that out.' They are going to work that out with the best tools they have. And those might not be very strong tools. So provide the tools, then walk away, and listen to how they are able to work that through," she says. "It's like learning anything. You hand over homework until a child doesn't know how to progress with it, and then you step back in to provide the support. What the parent is providing is the scaffolding to show the child how to build their skill set."

And similar to homework or driving—or any other skill you'd like your teenager to master—this can mean intervening more than once.

What's more, adds Speidel, dealing with siblings teaches your kids how to handle relationships in general. "Recognize that sibling rivalry is part of the growing process. When it does show up, view the conflict as an opportunity for your family to practice with each other. Because that is going to give your adolescent a lot of information about navigating difficult situations in the future."

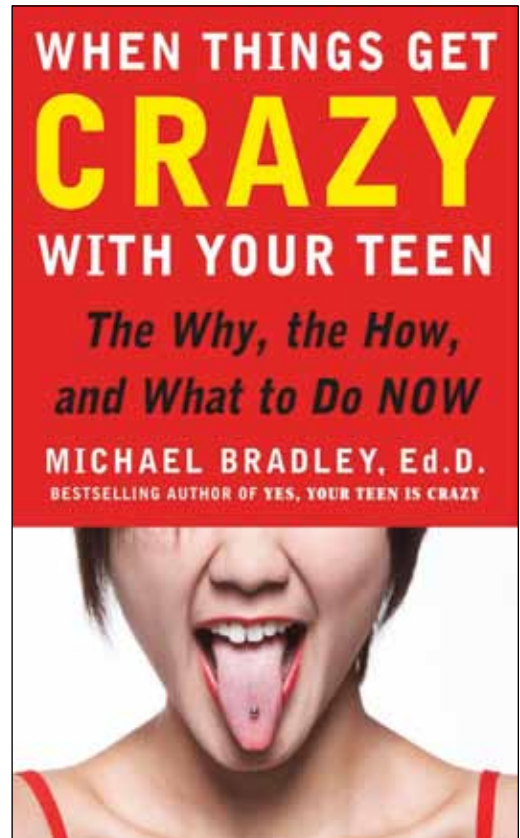
5. Acknowledge when you've had enough. About now, you may be thinking, "Yes, but some days, I just don't want to listen to it anymore!" Well, that's okay too. But, again, try to express your frustration without taking sides—or using harsh language. "So don't say, 'You guys don't know how to get along. I have had it with your arguing,'" Speidel says. "Instead, try: 'Wow. This just isn't working. There's just so much argument. I'm exhausted by it. I'm guessing you are exhausted by it too. Everybody, we are finding our own space.' You get the same outcome without judgment."

There's no doubt that sibling rivalry will show up for a visit in your home, but with understanding and (we hope) our experts' strategies in your pocket, you'll persevere. ■

ADVICE FROM AN EXPERT



Michael Bradley, Ed.D. is an expert on adolescents and an award-winning author of, most recently, *When Things Get Crazy With Your Teen: The Why, the How, and What to Do NOW*.



Why do we have sibling rivalry?

It is part of nature's plan. Parents view it as a pathology when, in fact, it's a normal developmental process that helps kids learn a heck of a lot. It's actually a valuable thing for kids to go through, in the proper dose and tone. But parents hate it; it tears their hearts to see the two creatures they love go after each other.

What are the kids learning?

They're testing. They're figuring out how to resolve conflict. They're figuring out sharing, boundaries, and loyalty. It's a complex process that helps kids deal with rivalry and competition in the outside world.

Is it different in adolescence?

Little kids will say, "You're a poop head," or "You're stu-

pid," or something like that, and parents will kind of chuckle. But when they hit the teen years and start dropping the F-bomb or saying other terrible things, the parents go on red alert, thinking their kids hate each other. In reality, though, they are just trying to figure out how to live together. It simply sounds much worse in adolescence. It's the same with the parents. Unlike four-year-old language, a teen's words can really hurt you. It can sound and feel like an adult viciously coming at you.

Is sibling rivalry different for boys and girls?

Yes. Girls are 12-18 months ahead of boys in adolescent development, and they're better at moving people around socially and emotionally. Boys don't care as much. They may have a big explosion and stomp off and be over it in 20 minutes. Girls can string out conflict for days.

So, what should parents do?

As little as humanly possible. It's tremendously hard, but again this is normal, natural, and important for kids to go through. The more parents step in, the worse it gets. Parents can do more damage when they try to decide guilt without knowing all of the information. Say, you hear an explosion. You weren't there. You don't know who did what to whom. And even if you were there for the explosion, you're still only seeing the end product. Maybe today's "victim" was actually yesterday's villain. You don't know, and that's why you've got to shrug your shoulders and say, "Sorry I wasn't there. You have to work it out."

And then walk away?

If you intervene, it's important to go about it in an unbiased way. You can say to your teenager, "Wow, it seems

you're really angry at your younger sister or brother. Can you tell me about that?" Then, don't judge. Nod and listen as you would with a friend and say, "Oh, I get it." You are showing support but not taking sides. Parents may feel like this is not doing anything, but you're supporting them. If you launch into the, "How dare you treat your younger sister like that," you are just priming the older child to go after the younger one.

Is there anything else we can do to help?

Try to see what else may be going on. If one child is suddenly acting out and you aren't aware of any specific causes, look at the bigger picture. Maybe their brother or sister is athletic and doing well in sports and the other isn't. A solution might be to find ways for that child to have stories and status, too. Some children are more

“When you are in the middle of the storm, it just feels awful and hopeless and forever. But, wait out the storm. It’s just a chapter.”

needy, while others are more autonomous. If you have a needier child, give them more attention. Show up at school and ambush the kid with a lunch date. They love that. Working in the background like this can help the rivalry. One trick that works about half the time is to offer an incentive to the competing sibs to work things out on their own. Offer to pay them for each AM and PM that they get through without a major blowout. Be clear that this is a team challenge, that they will win or lose together, even though only

one team member may have “started the fight.” This puts the onus upon them to learn to coexist without the parent officiating.

Is it wrong to assume the older child has an unfair advantage?

Again, it’s a nuanced judgment. The rule of thumb is don’t intervene in a judgmental way because you don’t know what happens when you aren’t there. And, if you defend the younger child against the older child, you’re giving the older child more reasons to resent the

younger one. So, avoid taking sides. In most situations, the younger child takes her shots in other ways.

Can you give parents some hope? When does the rivalry go away or at least lessen?

The less parents mess with it, the earlier it will go away. Otherwise, it can last well into young adulthood, and you don’t want that. In general, the greater the age range between your children, the faster it evaporates. Also, around 16 or 17, a magical truce seems to hap-

pen. By this age, your teenager’s brain has matured, and she can think at a higher level. At the same time, her life is expanding with her own friends and activities. Suddenly, the fighting stops and parents are wondering, “What happened?” It’s like everything else in child raising. When you are in the middle of the storm, it just feels awful and hopeless and forever. But, wait out the storm. It’s just a chapter. ■

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TEEN SPEAK

I Want What He Has

By Ahuva Sunshine

Sometimes, the Sunshine siblings have a rainy day. I don't need a Myers Briggs test to know I am very type A, and as a teen, I competed with my siblings in multiple arenas.

While my brother weighed in at wrestling matches, I weighed in at WeightWatchers. We were both athletic, but my brother mastered a physique that got him hired at Hollister, and I mastered a physique that got me all too familiar with Atkins, South Beach and self-loathing. He was the big man on (our high school) campus, but being a big woman on campus somehow never elicited the same respect and admiration.

Years later I learned (and continue to learn) to appreciate and love my body, but as a teen, it was a competition between my brother and me, and my brother was ahead. The areas in which I excelled felt irrelevant to me; this one issue became the arbiter of who was "better." We shared a house, and my brother's lifestyle was always in my face: the sound of the alarm waking him for his intense morning runs woke me as well, the rambling of the blender for his protein shakes disturbed my TV time, and his hyper awareness of calories and fat was far from discrete at our family meals. Even when we were apart, people talked to me about "my buff brother" and asked endless questions about his workouts and wrestling matches.

Maybe if I had stopped comparing my physique to my brother's and looked around, I would have realized that my size was average and that I didn't strike anyone (aside from some obnoxious relatives) as particularly large or overweight. Who knows what I could have accomplished with the time and energy I spent obsessing about this rivalry. It took moving out of the house and out of the state to see how absurd my sibling rivalry was.

Recently a friend commented on how fit my brother was, and I smiled and said I was happy for him. To my surprise, I really was. ■

UNLEASH — his — PASSION

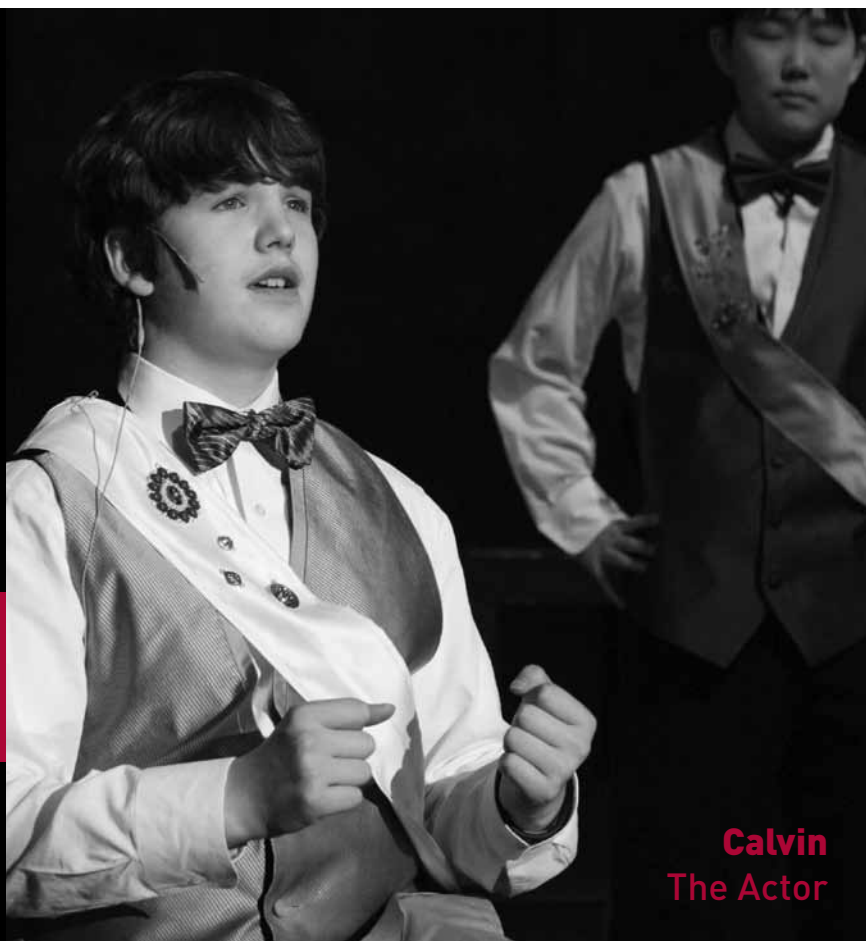
When he's not constructing robots as a member of University School's First Lego League or singing in the choral group, High Tops, Calvin, US class of 2019, can be found starring in the school's theater productions.

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Calvin
The Actor



Drugs & Alcohol:

Just Delay Experimentation

By Diana Simeon

Over the past fifteen years, researchers have learned a lot about what's going on inside your adolescent's head.

That includes how the adolescent brain responds to recreational drugs and alcohol. "Adolescence is a time when the parts of the brain that are particularly sensitive to recreational drugs are still developing," explains Dr. Laurence Steinberg, a professor of psychology at Temple University and author of the new book, *Age of Opportunity: Lessons from the New Science of Adolescence*.

In fact, when an adolescent uses recreational drugs before the age of 15, he's ten times more likely to develop a substance abuse problem than if he'd waited to experiment until after 21.

Here's why. Teenagers' brains are still developing the reward system (also known as the limbic system), which is what allows us to experience pleasure. When we have a rewarding experience—eating a delicious meal, winning a game, listening to music, and so on—our brain releases Dopamine and that makes it pleasurable.

But, drugs and alcohol interfere with

the limbic system's normal development. The molecular structure of recreational drugs looks similar enough to Dopamine that the adolescent brain—which has many more Dopamine receptors than the adult brain—treats them the same.

"As those artificial chemicals from alcohol and other drugs get into the brain, the brain makes less Dopamine. It thinks it has enough," Steinberg explains. "And as the brain makes less Dopamine, it starts to require more and more of the recreational drug in order to get the same feeling you would normally get naturally."

“Just say no” has long been the mantra of parents—and experts—when it comes to talking to adolescents about drugs and alcohol. But the problem is, it doesn’t work that well.

So when those adolescents grow up, they’re ten times more prone to addiction than their non-recreational-drug-using peers. Their early experimentation has permanently changed their brain’s reward system so that recreational drugs are now not only more enjoyable, but also more necessary for their brains to experience the pleasure a “normal” brain can produce on its own.

DELAYING EXPERIMENTATION

Researchers understand the importance of delaying adolescents’ use of recreational drugs, but how do we do it? Well, brain science can help here too, Steinberg says.

“Just say no” has long been the mantra of parents—and experts—when it comes to talking to adolescents about drugs and alcohol. But the problem is, it doesn’t work that well. According to the National Center for Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University, 75 percent of U.S. high school students have used drugs and alcohol and almost 50 percent continue to use those substances regularly.

The adolescent’s developing brain, in particular the reward system, is at play again here. During adolescence, the self-regulatory part of the brain is not as powerful as the reward system. In other words, the rewards of using drugs and alcohol—like, popularity—outweigh your adolescent’s ability to say no, despite the negative consequences.

Try the following tactics from Steinberg to keep your adolescent away from these substances:

- **Explain the science.** “Giving your adolescent a lecture on ‘this is bad for your brain’ probably is not going to do very much, but I think it’s good they at least understand it,” Steinberg says. “Adolescents enjoy learning about the adolescent brain, but whether this is going to stop them from trying these things is a whole different story.”
- **Explain your expectations frequently.** Talk early and often with your adolescent about your expectations that he will not use drugs and alcohol. Again, this may not necessarily prevent your adolescent from using these substances, but if it makes him think twice, you’re ahead of the game. Also, remind him that it’s illegal to use alcohol or legalized marijuana (and then only in states in which it is legal) until age 21.
- **Limit your adolescent’s opportunities for risky behavior.** “The prime time for experimenting with these things is in the afternoons, after school, when adults aren’t around,” Steinberg says. “The more you can make sure your teenager is in healthy, supervised activities after school and not just hanging around with friends, the more you are going to deter experimentation.” Unsupervised parties are also a bad idea. (See “Should I Call Before the Party?” on page 10.)
- **Limit access.** If you smoke, don’t leave your cigarettes around (note: nicotine is among the most addictive substances your teenager is likely to experiment with). Likewise, be cautious with your liquor supply and never keep prescription painkillers in an accessible spot, like your bathroom.
- **Delay as long as you can, but at least until 18.** The longer you can prevent your teenager from using these substances, the less they will impact his brain. Does that mean until age 21? There’s no certain answer, Steinberg says. “Delaying it to 18 or later is going to be very important. Whether it makes a difference to delay it after 18 is something we don’t yet know.”
- **Role play.** Help your adolescent come up with what to say when he’s offered drugs or alcohol by a peer. “You’re going to a party. What are you going to say if this happens?,” says Steinberg. “For example, ‘My mom would kill me if she smelled cigarette smoke on me’ or ‘I’m playing basketball this season. That’s why I’m not drinking now.’ Whatever the adolescent feels comfortable with.”
- **Be careful what you’re modeling.** Model a healthy relationship to these substances at home; if you’re struggling with a substance abuse problem, get help. “We don’t say this enough, but adolescents know a lot about using these substances from watching their parents. If you have a problem with drinking or drug use, you need to get that under control. By not getting help, you are setting an example your children will follow.” ■

A photograph of Ben Grasso, a young man with dark hair, wearing a plaid shirt and a grey beanie. He is standing in his studio, which is filled with large-scale abstract paintings. He has his hand on his chin, looking thoughtfully at the camera. The background shows several large canvases with dynamic, gestural brushstrokes in black, white, and grey.

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Ben Grasso
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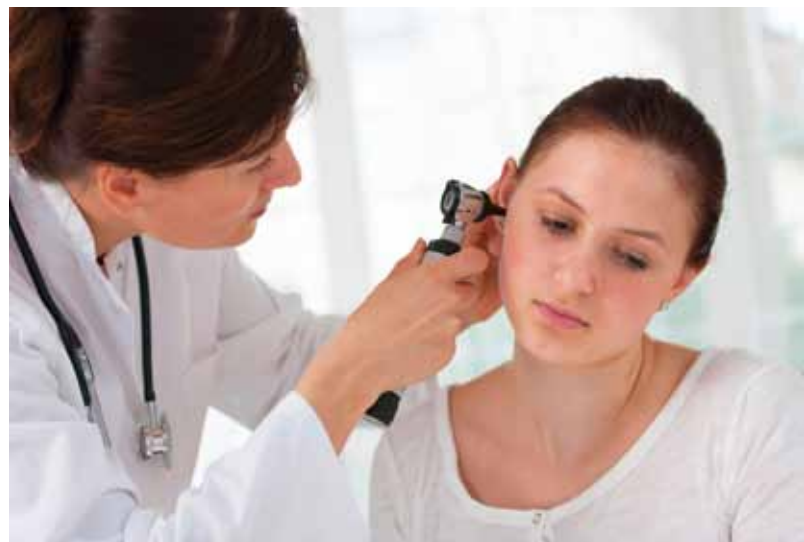


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About hearing (or not) and more ...

Piercings gone bad. Listening to the iPod too loud. Snoring. Strep. The common cold. This issue's Q&A with Dr. Todd Otteson, Division Chief of Pediatric Otolaryngology at University Hospitals Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital, answers our ear-nose-throat-related questions.



Our adolescents love their ear-buds and noise-canceling headphones. How much should we worry?

There's a risk of noise-induced hearing loss, and even permanent damage. Also, if your ear-buds are in and you're engaged in some other activity, you're not as aware of your surroundings. You might not hear the biker that wants to pass you when you're jogging. Or the car.

Should parents insist their teenagers lower the volume?

Yes. So, normal conversation is 60 decibels. We worry when sound is above 85 decibels. A sound above 85 decibels for eight hours can cause a hearing loss. And understand that the measuring of decibels is logarithmic, which means if a sound goes up by three decibels, it doubles in intensity. So, 88 decibels causes hearing loss after four hours and 100 decibels after just 15 minutes. The highest decibels on the iPod is 105, which can cause hearing loss after

5-10 minutes. The general rule is 60-60—no more than 60 minutes of listening at 60 percent of the volume. If you can hear your teenager's music through their headphones, it's too loud.

What about live music?

A really loud concert can be up to 110 decibels. That's not continuous, of course, given the breaks between songs. But, some doctors would recommend using earplugs, though adolescents may not want to hear that.

Does the hearing loss show up later in life—or are teenagers experiencing hearing loss?

It can happen during adolescence. The hearing loss starts to present at the higher frequencies and then chips away until it gets into the usual hearing test range, which can affect the day-to-day hearing.

Tonsils can still be an issue during adolescence, right?

Yes. We usually remove tonsils in younger kids—up un-



Todd Otteson, MD, MPH, is the Division Chief of Pediatric Otolaryngology at University Hospitals Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital.

til about six-years-old—for sleep apnea. Between six and eight, the indication is equally for sleep apnea and tonsillitis infections. After eight, it's for tonsillitis infections, including strep.

Why do some teenagers seem to get strep over and over?

Some teenagers are just more prone. We have parents who go through the gamut, making sure their adolescents are washing hands and changing toothbrushes, but they still get it. It can be a tough problem, and you miss a lot of school days. We consider tonsillectomy based on how many infections the patient has had.

Do some teenagers experience sleep apnea, too?

Yes, but it's not as common as in children. Teenagers sometimes don't have the best "sleep

hygiene." They stay up late doing homework and get up early the next morning for class. But snoring and pauses in breathing when they sleep are red flags for sleep apnea. You can send them for a sleep study to make a definitive diagnosis.

Let's talk about ears, like using a Q-tip to clean them.

It's tempting, but you should avoid that. An outer cleaning with a Q-tip is fine, but the ear canal cleans itself.

Even if there's a lot of wax?

The amount of wax production varies between people, but in general, wax serves an antibacterial purpose. But if it's causing pain or hearing problems because it is lodged in there, we recommend you see a doctor to clean it out safely. I have had some adolescent patients who presented with a ruptured eardrum from a Q-tip.

Teenagers love piercings, but what about ear cartilage infections?

It's a problem because the infected cartilage can cause significant swelling, and over the long term, the scarred cartilage gets very thick. Typically, we remove the piercing, drain any abscesses, and leave the piercing out for at least six months. Usually, the teenager will need oral antibiotics and, in the rare case, IV antibiotics to fight the *Pseudomonas* bacteria which is the most common bacterium in this type of infection. Cartilage piercings are more prone to infection and more difficult to heal because the cartilage isn't so vascular. There's less blood flow to those areas to deliver the antibiotics, so the infections can linger.

What's the best way to treat the common cold?

There are no hard and fast

rules, but I'd target the symptom. If it's nasal congestion and drainage, try guaifenesin to break up the mucus. If it's hard to breathe at night or there's drainage during the day, try oxymetazoline nasal spray for a couple of days. That can help shrink the tissues in the nose and open the nasal airway for better breathing. If the cold goes beyond 10 days or your teenager develops a fever or worsening symptoms after initial improvement, that's grounds to be evaluated for antibiotics.

Can a Neti pot help?

Yes, at least in trying to avoid an antibiotic. It flushes things out and helps clear away the mucus. Especially in patients that are prone to nasal issues, I absolutely think it can be helpful.

What else do you see teenagers for most commonly?

Nodules on the vocal cords, which can cause a raspy or hoarse voice. I begin by asking about their degree of voice use. What activities are they engaged in at school? Are they on the cheerleading squad? Or a singer? Then, we pinpoint how it started—as an upper respiratory infection, for example. Acid reflux can also contribute to voice issues. We pass a flexible scope down the nose to look at the voice box to help with the diagnoses, and if we see a nodule, we often treat it with voice therapy or medication if we see evidence of acid reflux.

Another issue with adolescents is a mass in the neck.

Is that as worrisome as it sounds?

The vast majority of the time, it's nothing to worry about. It's usually a reactive lymph node that's filtering a lingering infection. My level of suspicion depends on the location and

size of the mass. If it's just above the clavicles, I worry more than if it's in the neck. If it's large and it stays large, I worry about that. If it's tender and painful, I worry about that. If any of these symptoms are present, we may need to investigate further for lymphoma with a CAT scan or needle aspiration biopsy.

What should a parent do if a teenager comes to them with a neck mass?

Stop in with your pediatrician first. Again, a sinus or tonsil infection are the biggest culprits for lymph node swelling, which you can treat with antibiotics. I think of all the kids I've seen since I started practice, I only had one that ended up with a positive needle biopsy. So, don't panic.

Interview by Diana Simeon

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Different than my parents

By Fred Goodall



Author Fred Goodall and his daughter

While my teenage daughter and I were working on our Fantasy Football teams, news about Adrian Peterson's indictment for spanking his son with a switch scrolled across the screen.

My daughter had watched Peterson rack up points last season in our Fantasy Football league, and she looked confused as she read the news.

"What's a switch?" she asked.

I was glad that she knew nothing about switches.

When I told her and explained Peterson's situation, she was horrified.

"Why would a parent do that to his child?" she asked.

That wasn't an easy question to answer. While I don't condone spanking with a switch,

I understand how people's upbringing and socialization can make them believe it's an acceptable form of discipline. As I explained this to my daughter, memories of my childhood flooded my mind.

When I was young, people didn't think twice about spanking children. It was an accepted form of punishment that few people questioned. I was paddled in school more times than I care to remember.

Although people used various items to spank their children—belts, shoes, paddles, extension cords—kids feared the switch the most. I always dreaded hearing the words, "Go get me a switch"—a request that could have come from a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, or trusted neighbor. This added psychological level made the punishment even worse. Picking out my own switch seemed absurd. The person who spanked me with the switch should choose it.

I'd choose a brittle branch that had been lying on the ground for a while. I knew that these types of branches caused little harm. However, a branch breaking during the spanking only made things worse for me.

"Go bring me a decent switch or else."

These ominous words sent me back outside to find something more acceptable. I knew exactly what type of switch they were looking for: supple and firm enough to make a slicing sound as it whipped through air.

If you've never been hit with a switch, consider yourself lucky. It feels like dozens of bees are stinging you at once. The switch will also leave marks on your body, sometimes even cutting deep into the skin.

My mother, and other relatives, spanked me with a switch without question. I

don't harbor any ill feelings toward them because I know they never intended to do any permanent damage. They were simply disciplining their children in the way their parents had disciplined them. However, I realized that I had the power to end this cycle. Nobody deserves to be spanked with a switch; I can't fathom hitting my children with a small tree branch. It does more damage than good, and there are much more effective discipline methods.

I shared my background and thoughts with my daughter, and it left her flabbergasted.

"Wow!" she said. "That's terrible. I feel sorry for you."

"Don't feel sorry for me," I said. "Those things are in the past. I've learned from them, and the lessons have helped me to be a better father for you." ■

You may know Fred Goodall as Mocha Dad, thanks to his popular blog, MochaDad.com.



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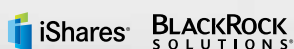
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What Happens When You Click Submit?

A behind-the-scenes peek at the admission's process at three different kinds of institutions

By Diana Simeon

Now that your teenager has submitted his college application, you can kick back and relax, right? Sure you can...if you don't spend the next several months wondering what's happening on the other side? *Your Teen* decided to find out.

Many colleges adopt a "holistic" admissions process that looks at the big picture: grades, scores, essays, letters of recommendation, extra-curricular activities, and so on. Others take a quantitative approach and rely mostly on grades and scores. Schools in the former category tend to be private and selective, though the flagship campuses of many public universi-

ty systems are trending this way as well. An interesting side note: Many international universities—including the most elite—still look almost exclusively at quantitative measures.

If your student has applied to a school in the holistic category, then the process starts with an admissions staffer—often a regional counselor, who is familiar with your teenager's high school—reading over the application. Every application gets read, no matter what.

"There is no being out of the mix even before you're in the mix," explains Catherine Davenport, dean of admissions at Dickinson College, which received more than 5,700 ap-

plications last year for its freshman class of about 600. "Our commitment is to review each application fully."

Admissions staffers from similar institutions echoed Davenport's remarks. These schools won't automatically reject your teenager because, say, his test scores are lower than the school's average. But, this first round can end in admittance, rejection (typically for those well outside of the college's admissions criteria) and deferral (if they applied early action, say). However, most applications will undergo a second (or sometimes a third) read-through, either by a different staff member or by a committee. Why so many? There are more qualified stu-

dents than open spots.

"We know these students can be successful here, but we're looking at who this person is now and who they are going to become as a result of this opportunity," Davenport explains. "They will become a member of our community. How will they participate? Will our faculty enjoy having them in the classroom? How will they grow and learn, and how will others grow and learn from them?"

The bottom line? It's a subjective process. And, a student who gets in one year may not have gotten in the year before—or vice versa.

"You don't know how it's going to play out in any given year," Davenport says. "From



Got Teens?



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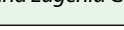
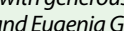
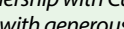
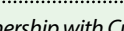
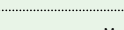


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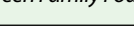
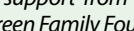
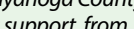
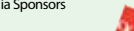
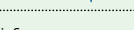
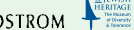
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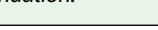
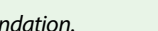
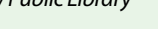
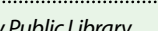
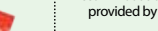
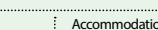
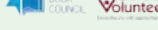
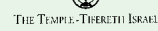
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our perspective, there's no magic formula. There's no, 'If you do these four activities, and you add a leadership role in too, and these AP or honors courses, and add this amount of volunteer work in, you will get in ...' There is not a magical way for this to come together."

Schools with a more quantitative process base their decisions mostly on the academic record (transcript, GPA, and test scores), says Gary Swegan, associate vice president for enrollment planning and management for Youngstown State University. They usually only take a closer look at students who are "on the bubble" and examine more of the applicant's record, like extracurriculars.

And what about specialty colleges, like art or design school or a conservatory program? These institutions also measure portfolios and auditions in their holistic process.

Take the Rhode Island School of Design, which requires students to submit an application (with essays), transcript, test scores, plus a portfolio and two drawing samples (based on prompts developed by the school each year).

"Their visual work is really key to their admission to RISD," explains Lucy King, associate director of admissions.

Like their more traditional counterparts, some students are an easy yes, some are an easy no and a whole bunch of applicants fall in the middle.

"This is the really difficult thing about working for a competitive arts college. Our acceptance rate is about 27 percent, so that means that lots of candidates who are totally qualified to attend aren't admitted," King says. "It becomes really hard and frequently, it comes down to interesting factors

that may or may not be related to their work."

This is where the essay, transcript, and even extracurriculars can really come into play. "For example, their work may be really good and maybe they had some interesting activity they were involved in," King adds. "A person with lower grades and an amazing portfolio may do well at RISD, a person with perfect grades and a less developed portfolio might do well at RISD, and it's up to us to figure out the balancing point."

So, what, if anything, should your teenager do while she's waiting? Admissions staffers say that they welcome hearing from students, but for genuine reasons, like being awarded a prize or other honor, improved scores or perhaps landing the lead in the school play. Applicants should also check their email frequently to see whether a school has requested additional information. And, if your student is waitlisted, staffers say an email demonstrating continued interest—and reiterating why—can help.

Instead of fretting over the admissions process, help your teenager understand that whatever happens, it will work out. Sometimes that may mean attending a college that wasn't her No. 1 choice; or, it could mean going to another school for a year, then re-applying to her No. 1.

"High school seniors put a ton of pressure on themselves, and it's like they think this one year decides their whole entire future forever. It doesn't," King says. "Taking that pressure off and saying, 'You know, all of this can be adjusted as I go forward,' would make for a much less stressed out group of people." ■

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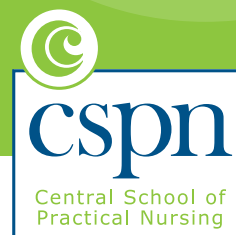
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Credit Cards

Building your teen's credit history

By Teresa Dixon Murray

When Bill Hardekopf's son began his senior year in high school, Hardekopf co-signed on a credit card.

While that might sound risky, Hardekopf wanted to spend his son's last year before college discussing the monthly statements as a family and making sure he paid his bill.

"A credit card is a great idea for some kids and it's a terrible idea for others," says Hardekopf, who lives in Birmingham, Alabama. "It provided a lot of great teachable moments for us."

Most parents face this question: When and how do you introduce your teenagers to credit cards? Some people can handle a credit card at 16; others aren't ready at 21.

Hardekopf was confident he could start his teens off on the right foot since he's the CEO of LowCards.com, a company that helps consumers evaluate credit cards.

For teenagers who can handle the responsibility, getting a credit card can allow them to build a credit history. This is critically important, explains Kathy Virgallito, national manager of community affairs for Apprisen Financial Advocates.

Young adults need to start building a credit file so when they want to rent an apartment or get a car loan or mortgage, they'll have a history for lenders to review, Virgallito says.

But how can you know whether your teen is ready for the re-

sponsibility? Hardekopf recommends that parents gauge a teenager's readiness for a credit card with a simple test: Can your teenager save money from allowances and gifts, and not spend everything? If so, here's how to help your teenager get started:

- Get a card with a low credit limit (\$500).
- Monitor the account online and make sure payments are made on time.
- Urge your teenager to set up automatic payments from his checking account. If you co-signed, you'll want to make at least the minimum payments yourself.
- Set up text alerts to be notified of large

transactions, balances nearing the credit limit, etc.

- Encourage your teen to use the card for convenience and to build a history—not to supplement income. Every month's bill should be paid in full.

According to Laura Levine, CEO of JumpStart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy in Washington D.C., today's laws make it more difficult for teenagers to get credit cards.

However, here are three ways your teenager can get her first card:

- 1) On her own, if she has income.
- 2) With you as a co-signer.

3) As an authorized user on one of your existing accounts. This is an easy way to start building a history without worry of a credit application being denied.

But before you add your teenager to your account, make sure it has a low balance and great payment history. Also, ask your bank whether it reports authorized users to the credit bureaus. Some will report only two users; others, like Bank of America, will report four. ■



PHOTO BY BETH SEGAL

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Interview with Anna Quindlen

What can we say about Anna Quindlen that hasn't been said many times before? A Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist for the *New York Times* and then *Newsweek*, she's also the author of six fiction and eight non-fiction books including, most recently, the bestselling *Still Life With Bread Crumbs*. We're big fans.



In the span of three years, you decided to leave the *New York Times* to raise your kids, but your career still worked out quite well. With all of the talk today around “leaning in,” how do you think women can find balance?

I didn't leave the *New York Times* to raise my kids. I was already raising them when I was a columnist there. I left to become a novelist. But when a woman trades in a powerful job for one that is assumed to be less powerful, everyone assumes it's because of her family. Debora Spar and Sheryl Sandberg both have something important to say to girls and women—and both of them are friends—but relying on only one would be like

using only one news source to learn about the world. You have to read widely and deeply, and think hard, because there is no one-size-fits-all directive for how to live your life. If there was, I wouldn't have left the *Times* in the first place.

As a writer, how did you learn to deal with criticism?

The only critical voice that matters is your own. You have to learn when it's speaking from certainty and when it's speaking from insecurity. You also have to develop a transactional relationship with it. There's a moment, at the end of the last draft of every book, when I read the manuscript aloud. That

way I can hear all the clunks and stutterstops and run-on sentences. Then when I'm done I say to myself, “Self, this is a good piece of work.” Embedding that sentiment in my psyche goes a long way toward keeping me sane. Of course, you have to have done the work first to make that a true, and truly felt, sentence.

Have you built a thick enough skin so that you can ignore the negative criticism?

If you mean reviews, I haven't read them for the last four books, even the good reviews. I wasn't learning anything from them, really. My best friend vets them, and then she tells me who we hate. Works for me.

You have referenced that people should try to live life like they have a terminal illness? Do you still believe that and have you been able to pass that philosophy on to your children?

Yep, more now than ever. I'm 62 years old, which means that I've lived a lot more of my past than I will get in the way of a future. I'm also at the age at which friends die, which only ought to redouble your determination to live your life with gusto. My kids don't really get that in the way I did because they've never watched someone they love die by inches. But they've certainly heard the message enough.



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When your kids were teens, did they know that you were famous? How did it impact them?

When I asked them, they responded:

"You weren't famous in a way that teenagers cared about (no offense). I've always been immensely proud of your accomplishments. But you never acted 'famous,' so it wasn't something that registered much in my perception of you."

It wasn't the kind of fame that hugely impacted the life of a 16-year-old who was mostly interested in heavy metal. My friends weren't giving me copies of *Black and Blue* to get signed.

Do you have one big parenting mistake and how would you have done it differently?

I think I was too focused sometimes on externals. Honestly, it didn't really matter where my kids went to college. They were all smart, curious, creative. That wasn't going to change. For two seasons I wouldn't let them watch *The Simpsons*. I actually can't remember why. Stuff like that. Now that they are 31, 29, 26, and fantastic, so much of that stuff around the margins just seems absurd.

As you reflect on parenting, what are the three things that worked for you that you want to share with parents in the thick of teenagerdom?

There's actually one primary thing: remember. Remember what it was like to be a teenager. Remember how everything that happened seemed so fraught and important, often because it was happening for the first time. Remember how friendships and crushes could throw you into a swivel, so that you won't minimize it when it happens to the teenager in your house.

Remember how you were ruled by your hormones and moods. Don't call your friends in a panic and say, "Oh my god, I think he/she is having sex/smoking pot/failing chemistry" unless you can genuinely say that you never had sex/smoked pot/failed a course when you were that age. Even if you can say you never did, remember the kids you knew who did those things and who went on to live rich and fulfilling lives.

Every time you deal with a 17-year-old, try to keep your own 17-year-old self front and center in your own mind. It made an enormous difference for me. Just remember.

What do you wish you hadn't worried about?

The SATs.

What do you think parents today worry about that they shouldn't?

The SATs.

What do you think parents today should worry about?

Henry James once wrote, "Three things in human life are important: the first is to be kind, the second is to be kind, and the third is to be kind." If your kids grow up learning and living that, you've been a success as a parent.

Can you share a moment you are proud of as a parent?

It doesn't work like that. You think it's going to be graduations, or weddings, or curtain calls. But it's really that moment when you look around the dinner table, and they're all talking about something interesting and important, and one of them makes a trenchant observation, and another makes a great joke, and you think to yourself, I made three great humans. ■

—S.B.



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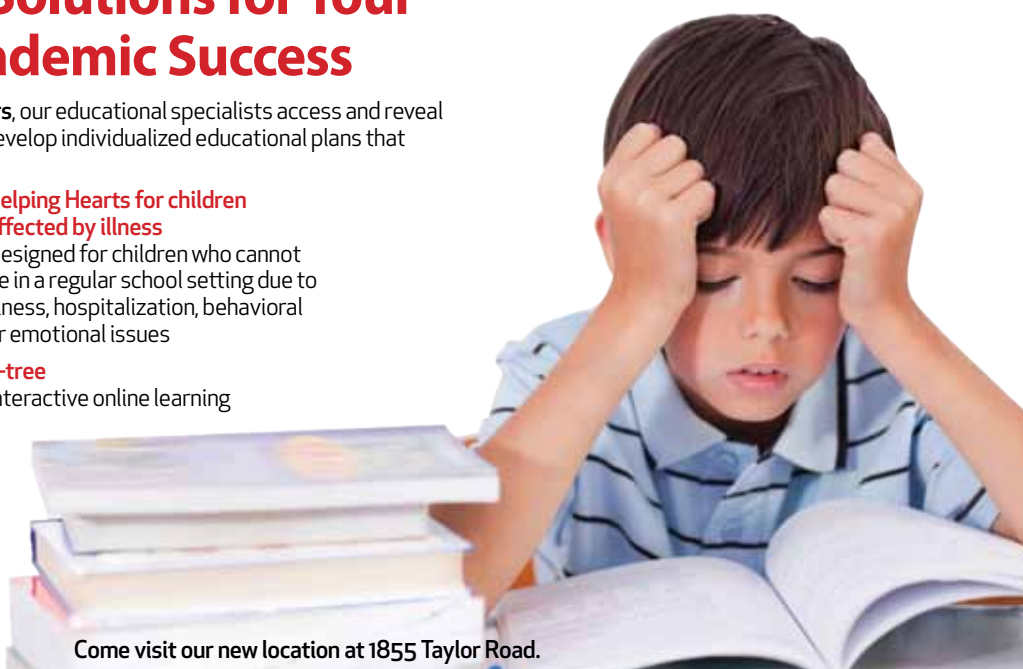
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What's In A Name?

Ummm...It's Katherine, Not Katie

By Jane Parent

Remember all the time and effort that your pregnant self spent dreaming of baby names? Doodling on scrap paper, agonizing between Elizabeth or Isabella? What a total waste of time THAT was. By age two, Elizabeth will somehow be nicknamed “Bizzy.” Isabella? She will be your “Bellybug” until college. My niece, Teresa, was “Tata” for years (until she learned what “tata” meant to 99% of the population). We named my son Charles and called him Charlie after my grandfather. We should have just polled his future coaches and chosen one of the various names they gave him: Chuck, Upchuck, Chuckles, Chas.

Nicknames can literally define you for all eternity, and yet, most of us didn't nec-

essarily choose them. And, they can change throughout your life. Take me: My parents named me Mary Jane, but always called me Jane and never Mary. And, my family nickname is actually...Cheeks. Long story. After I took my husband's surname, I became Jane Parent. (Thought that was just a clever pseudonym, did you?) And it gets better; I'm married to Joe Parent. This duo of fake-sounding aliases practically begs for puns. (“Ohhh, your name is Parent, and you are parents!”)

Childhood nicknames are usually an expression of parental affection. “You may have chosen a formal name like Joseph, but no one wears a tuxedo to every event, so depending on the situation and time in life, your child may be Joseph, Joey, Joe, or Jojo.

Nicknames can be like a fossil record of your childhood,” says Laura Wattenberg, author of *The Baby Name Wizard* and creator of BabyNameWizard.com.

As your child becomes a teen, they may suddenly decide they hate their name. “As teens experiment with their own identity and the person they want to be, they may decide that their cute family pet name no longer feels like them,” Wattenberg says.

Katie may churn through seven different variations of Katherine until she lands on what feels “right.” Thinking you can control your child's nickname, warns Wattenberg, “is a complete illusion. Remember that it's your name until you give it to your child. And then it is theirs.”

Teen nicknames can be a form of affectionate teasing or even a bonding ritual. Jonathan may become “Johnny” to his baseball teammates. He may acquire a nickname from friends that you loathe—say, J-Dawg or JohnnyFresh. “If a silly nickname is given in affection and not as an insult, it will pass, and it isn't worth fighting over,” Wattenberg says. “If your son wants to be called Johnny at home, treat his decision as an identity shift that you should respect.”

You might even get a fun nickname that replaces “Mom” or “Dad.” My husband is usually “Big D” (or “Dudders” or “D-Money”) to our kids. He fought it for a while, but I think he kinda likes it now. Nicknames are like that, aren't they? ■

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YOUR teenTM

for parents

Thanksgiving

Not my favorite food,
but that doesn't matter

By Rochelle Weinstein



Here's my holiday confession: I don't like turkey. I don't like cranberries. I don't like stuffing. While my husband looks forward to devouring Thanksgiving delicacies, I brace myself for brushing my fork along the plate, carefully directing the pieces to disguise that I haven't touched a thing.

I also hate the traffic. We live in South Florida, and the snowbirds descend upon us with their families, followed by college kids from the northeast who roast their skin under our hot Thanksgiving sun. There are two main arteries in and out of our town, and they, like the arteries of our bodies when exposed to too much stuffing and gravy, can get pretty clogged during holiday season.

This year, I decided to move Thanksgiving to our summer cottage in Beech Mountain, North Carolina. I was ready to get out of Florida and host all the cousins and siblings in the mountains. I envisioned us playing our football game in sweatshirts and on a grassy knoll, sipping egg nog, and immersing ourselves in the traditions of a true northern holiday.

My teenage son didn't

share the same vision.

"Mom, if we go to North Carolina, we're going to miss the Maccabi games. I've never missed them," he said. Had we taught him nothing about prioritizing family over football?

"Sure, Jordan. I'll just tell your aunts, uncles, and 17 cousins that you'd rather not go because you prefer to play games with your buddies."

He reacted to this with the requisite teenage eye roll and indecipherable grunt, to which I responded with the requisite parental admonition.

"*This is Thanksgiving!*" I screamed across the table. "Do you have any idea how grateful you should be? Do you realize there are people in the world starving or sick or without family? You have everything—a roof over your head, a great school, parents who love you, and so much more."

He was unmoved. "I really don't want to go to North Carolina," he repeated.

I was stubborn and adamant. "We are going to NC."

He grunted again, crossed his arms, and looked as annoyed as I felt. We laid the subject of Thanksgiving aside for awhile, but it soon re-surfaced when my son's cell flashed the

following texting string between my niece and him:

Mom's getting all nutso about a mountain holiday.

IT'S FREEZING HERE. I WANT TO BE IN MIAMI.

You know my mom. She gets something in her head, and we're all doomed.

YOUR FAMILY'S TURKEY! THE BEACH! WE NEED TO BE THERE!

Tell your dad to talk to her. He's the only one who can change her mind. You guys can do Maccabi with us. It's awesome.

I'M ON IT.

I felt neither guilt nor anger at rifling through their exchange. Actually, their sense of connection to each other and to our family warmed my heart. In person, these teens often pretend the other doesn't exist; yet here they were, communicating across the miles about Thanksgiving. They understood the closeness I shared with my brother, they appreciated the holiday food and Jordan wanted his cousins to join him at the Maccabi games.

And so it dawned on me. This was the essence of the holiday—this conspiring-against-us-adults text exchange. In their innocent words, I saw a bond of togeth-

erness, a willingness to share, and the desire to be together, regardless of the location. I'd spent so many hours trying to drill *the right thing* into their heads that I'd lost sight of the true meaning of the holidays.

So, I still don't like turkey or stuffing or cranberries; warm weather doesn't feel like the right temperature for Thanksgiving; and the mess of holiday traffic still drives me crazy; but, whether the temperature is too cold or too hot, I now feel fortunate to join together with family, enjoy a wonderful meal, and share our gratitude.

And whether that holiday table is in North Carolina or Miami Beach, it's about the faces surrounding us, the people in our lives whom we love, and the things we would do for them out of love. Every day. Without pause. Without blinking.

The essence of holiday spirit comes from deep within our hearts. It crosses miles and surpasses logic. You don't always see it. You can't always touch it. In my case, you don't always taste it.

But if you close your eyes, you can feel it all around you. ■

Rochelle Weinstein is an author, blogger, speaker, and the mother of fourteen-year-old twin sons.

*Must it always be about them?
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Why Didn't You Text Me?

By Stephanie Schaeffer Silverman



I asked her to text me when she got there.

Four letters. H-O-M-E. That's it. She should be home by now. I glance at the clock. Yep, she should definitely be home. The grace period is over. I dial; she picks up.

"You were supposed to text me when you got there," I say with a definite edge to my voice.

"Oh, I forgot." Duh.

I'm waiting for the, "It's not a big deal," but it doesn't come—mainly because she's not 17. It's not in her vernacular, and she's not my daughter. She's 74, and she's my mom.

You read that right—my mom. Just when I thought I was done "parenting" the newest driver in my house, my parents arrived to spend a month in CLE. It was a great idea. Having rented their own place ten minutes away, they could come and go as they pleased, watch various

sporting events with us, take a walk, grab a coffee—all of the things I've missed out on for 27 years. What I gravely underestimated (in the I-didn't-estimate-at-all way) was the worry factor.

"Of course we're home—we left your house 30 minutes ago. We've been home for awhile." Yeah, I know, cause I've been worried for "awhile."

"Yeah—just wanted to make sure you got there," I say. I want to add, "Mothers worry, right?" I wanted to say, "Just wait until you're a ..." Oh wait, she is.

"Where else would we be?" she asks in a tone that makes me wonder if I'm talking to my son. Snark runs deep in our family.

Admittedly, my worry makes no sense. FOR YEARS, in a land far, far away, all week long, my parents come and go at their leisure. I used to go days without talking to them—maybe even a week. But in this new world, I'm worked up if it's 9 a.m., and I haven't talked to them

yet. I picture their apartment with its narrow stairs. Did one of them fall down the stairs? Did the other hear it? Did they both fall down? OMG—my mind is on a runaway train, and I need to pull the emergency break to stop the synapses from firing.

I recall our trips back and forth from Pennsylvania to Cleveland. "Just call us when you get home," they'd ask as we hugged goodbye. I never quite got it.

Until Zach started driving. Until my parents started their extended stay 10 minutes away. I get it now. PLEASE don't even make me list the crazy that my head can weave in four seconds flat. It's impressive. And, it's inherited.

"You'll always be my baby," my mom used to say. "I'll always worry about you."

Really? Why? Wasn't there anything better for her to do?

Lucky me—now I know there isn't. ■

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