

MOMS

mentoring of mothers society

Help! My Daughter Has a Mohawk! by Brandie Bradshaw

“Brandie, can you stay with our two teen girls for a week while we’re away?” “Oh FOR SURE! No problem!”

Little did I know the full impact of that decision. You see, I am a professional youth worker; I love teenagers. I love their awkwardness; I love their boldness and bluntness; I love how fragile and honest they are. I have often been known to say, “Teenagers are my people group!” But you see, I only see them by my choice, I don’t live with them and they are not dependent on me for anything.

This fact became all too real for me as I recently found myself thrust into the role of stand-in parent of two teenagers. It taught me a lot; mostly it gave me a new perspective on parenting teenagers. So please allow me to share a youth worker’s thoughts on parenting teenagers.

There are many teen issues out there but none of them are “new”. Sure, the symptoms might look different, but the causes have not changed dramatically. The first thing you can do as a parent is step back and realize this truth. Don’t focus on the Mohawk or the piercing...or more severely the cutting. These are mostly all outward expressions of deeper

thoughts and feelings. (I say mostly because the odd time your child just likes the “punk” fashion and it’s as simple as that.) At the core of these “issues” are the same things that have always marked adolescence - need for acceptance, self-esteem, identity formation, independence, etc.

There are so many forces out there applying pressure to today’s teenager. In its core definition, adolescence is the journey from childhood to adulthood; from dependence to independence. That’s a bumpy road. Often teenagers are treated like children and at other times expected to be mature adults. Think about the conflicting messages they can hear in a single day: “No way - you aren’t old enough to do that yet!” “Come on, you should be old enough to know better!” That can be confusing and frustrating for anyone.

The outward expression of frustration in adolescence actually makes sense to me when I sit back and look at the general overview of child rearing. When they are young we do our best to protect them from all the negative things in the world for as long as we can. Then they get to middle-school or high school and the big bad

world hits them and they go into shock! They have little to no tools to deal with the negative things the world throws at them. Kids are growing up in a hand-sanitizer world these days and their ability to properly cope with stress is almost non-existent.

So how can you as a parent help your teenager in this turbulent time of life? Be the one place they are always accepted and loved no matter what clothing they wear, no matter what “phase” they are in and no matter what expectations you have of them. Force yourself to be interested in the things that interest them. Why is it that when our kids are little we know everything about “The Wiggles” but when they become teens we barge in the room and yell, “turn that down!” rather than “hey, who are you listening to?”

Lastly, I would recommend sitting down with your kids and start being intentional about teaching them coping skills, showing them how you deal with the stress and frustration that is inevitable in life.

Basically, as a parent you can either be your teenagers’ biggest critic or their biggest fan! Be proud of that Mohawk. Rock one yourself!

Brandie is the Director of High School Ministries at Northview Church in Abbotsford.

MAY 2010

IN THIS ISSUE:

Help!	1
Kelly’s Great Picks	1
MOMS Favorites	2
Special Events	2
Health & Nutrition	2
Submission Info	2
Quote of the Day	2

MOMS

Purpose Statements

To provide a network that encourages and equips moms to be the best mothers they can be.

To provide mothers the opportunity for personal growth through developing their skills and talents.

To provide a safe place for women to share their struggles and concerns related to raising a family.

To provide experienced women the opportunity to mentor other mothers.

Kelly’s Great Picks for Teens & ‘Tweens

MOMS Program Director, Kelly Rader, shares some excellent resource suggestions for parents of teens and ‘tweens:

Passport to Purity by Dennis & Barbara Rainey - An excellent resource we have used with all three of our children. This book and DVD set for a weekend getaway with your child facilitates communication about

body changes and sex. I highly recommend it. It is available on the FamilyLife Today website (www.familylifecanada.org)

Mom, I Feel Fat: Becoming Your Daughter’s Ally in Developing a Healthy Body Image by Sharon Hersh - A great resource on what you need to know to guide your teens through this often difficult to broach

subject. There are great questions for you to open conversations with your teens.

Mom, Sex is No Big Deal! Becoming Your Daughter’s Ally in Developing a Healthy Sexual Identity by Sharon Hersh - A great resource on what you need to know to guide your teens

(continued on page 2)

Kelly's Great Picks

(continued from page 1)

through this delicate subject. There are great questions for you to use as conversation starters with your teens.

What Every Child Needs: Meet Your Child's Nine Basic Needs for Love by Elisa Morgan - Understand your child better and how to meet his/her needs.

The Five Love Languages of Children by Gary Chapman and Ross Campbell, M.D. - Discover your child's primary "love language" and learn what you can do to effectively convey unconditional feelings of respect, affection, and commitment that will resonate in your child's emotions and behaviour.

And finally, MOMS board member Carol Hofer suggests **Have A New Kid by Friday: How to Change Your Child's Attitude, Behaviour & Character in Five Days** by Kevin Leman. Tired of defiant attitudes and power struggles with your kids? Dr. Kevin Leman reveals why your kids do what they do and what you can do about it. He gives you simple principles that can give you results in as little as five days.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

We'd love to hear from you!

Is there something exciting happening in your Chapter? Have a favourite movie, book or helpful website? Is there an event in your community other moms might be interested in?

If you have something to share with the MOMS community, please pass it on and we'll include it in a future newsletter.

Email the editor at:
momsnewslettereditor@gmail.com

QUOTE OF THE DAY

As a teenager you are at the last stage in your life when you will be happy to hear that the phone is for you.

~Fran Lebowitz, *Social Studies*

MOMS FAVORITES

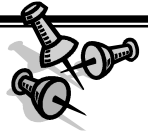
Feeling confused over which movie to rent this weekend? Wondering what games are appropriate for your child or teen? Check out Focus on the Family's Pluggedin on line.

This site provides reviews on movies, video rentals, music, television shows and games. You can also read articles on a variety of entertainment related topics.

www.pluggedin.com

"Shining a light on the world of popular entertainment."

COMMUNITY EVENTS



MOMS' NIGHT OUT!

Friday, May 21, 2010

ABC Country Restaurant
32080 Marshall Rd, Abbotsford

This month's MOMS' Night Out will feature guest speaker **Jenn Keller**, shopping, coffee and dessert, chocolate and a fun night out with the girls. You won't want to miss it!

Only 80 tickets available. Don't wait...get yours today.

Tickets are \$10 and available at: www.mentoringofmothers.com

KIDSWORLD MEMBERSHIP: A Great Summer Opportunity

The **Kidsworld Membership** is a unique program offering children between the ages of four and 15 more than 65 days of events and activities to choose from. There is a different event in a different location every day of the summer!

A **Kidsworld Membership** is only \$45.00 and allows a child and one adult (adults portion interchangeable) to attend all events for this one price. Highlights include Playland, Theatre Under the Stars and much more. Using this membership for just a couple of events will more than pay for itself!

You may register and find more information at www.kidsworldprogram.com. On your form please mention that you heard about this offer through MOMS as they will reward us for getting the word out. Feel free to pass on the information to anyone you know may benefit. We know with the economy many families will be looking for fun summer activities that are cost effective and close to home. This is a great way to achieve both goals.

HEALTH & NUTRITION: Caffeine and Kids

Confused about caffeine and your kids? Caffeine has the same stimulant effects on children and teens as it does on adults, though these effects can be stronger in children because their bodies are smaller.

Caffeine side effects can prevent children from doing well in school. They include:

- Irritability and restlessness
- Difficulty concentrating
- Afternoon sleepiness

Caffeine can be found in some soft drinks (colas, some root

beers) chocolate, coffee, tea, iced mocha drinks and some other drinks (the name usually includes the words "energy", "rush", "adrenaline", "bull").

Caffeine is not always listed in the ingredient list but caffeine containing ingredients to look for include:

- Coffee or coffee beans (not coffee flavouring)
- Green or black tea leaves
- Guarana
- Yerba
- Cocoa beans

Children and adolescents can also experience withdrawal symptoms such as headaches, irritability and restlessness. Be sure to stock beverages at home with little or no caffeine. This will make better choices easier for everyone. Your best options are water, milk or 100% fruit juice.

The content for this resource was developed by BC's Public Health Dieticians. For more information contact Dietician Services at HealthLink BC (8-1-1) or www.healthlinkbc.ca