



Rebellion and a teen's quest for identity

"But what happens when a teen starts to rebel against everything they have been taught?"

All parents want their teen to make right, good, and godly choices all the days of their lives. Parents work, strive, and pray that strong values taught to them will always win out. But what happens when a teen starts to rebel against everything they have been taught? It is definitely not uncommon for parents to assume blame when a teen begins to turn their back on everything they have learned. After all, Proverbs says that if we train our children "in the way they should go, when they are old they will not depart from it." When thoughts of failure begin to creep in and all hope seems lost, here are a few things to consider. It is not uncommon in a teen's quest for identity and independence to reject some of the values of their parents, their church, and society, and to a degree this is not unhealthy. Young people need to develop their own convictions about life. Part of the process may involve challenging the values and convictions they have been taught (probe.org). When this happens, allow your teen to ask questions, but answer them (with gentleness and respect) from Scripture and from living by example the way you expect your teen to live. Second, when your teen starts to rebel, meet the challenge immediately. Many times, a parent's initial reaction to a teen's poor decision is to just let it slide. If a parent continues to let a teen push the envelope, it will cause serious frustration and heartache. Discuss the issue, set clear and defined boundaries, and live by them. If you are a parent who feels like you have lost your teen, you are not alone. God is with you every step, loving and encouraging you all the way. Your teen must decide to change. This can happen through hours of prayer, consistent love (sometimes tough love) displayed, and a life lived that reflects Christ.

Here are some proactive steps to help shape your teen's attitude away from rebellion:

- 1. Set fair ground rules.** Your teen must know what you expect and the consequences if those rules are broken. Set these rules together. Getting your teen involved with this necessary process is always smart.
- 2. Keep the rules consistently.** If you set a rule, then you MUST follow through with the consequence. If your teen knows you won't enforce a punishment, then they will continue to make poor decisions.
- 3. Have a check-in system.** While your teen is out with friends, set specific times where they must check in with you. If they don't want their friends to know they are checking in with you, have them send you a text message. This accountability will strongly discourage your teen from making a rebellious decision.
- 4. Know your teen's friends.** Before they go out, make sure you know who your teen is hanging out with. Just knowing a friend's name doesn't mean you "know" them. Ask your teen's friends to come to your house. You can learn a lot just by observing.



How would your teen answer the following questions?

Of the following activities or behaviors, what creates A LOT of tension between you and your parents? (Top 6 choices listed)

- 32% - Schoolwork
 - 30% - Your behavior
 - 25% - Chores
 - 20% - Money
 - 18% - Your privacy
 - 14% - Bedtime
- (usaweekend.com)

Which, if any, of the following topics have you had a serious and informative discussion with at least one of your parents?

- 48% - Physical changes of adolescence
 - 48% - Premarital sex
 - 60% - Smoking
 - 52% - Illegal drug use
 - 59% - Drinking
- (usaweekend.com)

The Parent POV (point of view)

Whether you are getting along or having World War III in your home, here are some questions to ask your teen to help the yelling stop and the talking start.

1. When you make a mistake, how would you like for us to deal with the situation?
2. Do you have anyone in your life who keeps you accountable for your actions and behaviors? If yes, who is it? If no, why don't you?
3. If you ever got in serious trouble, who would you call for help? Why? Would we ever be an option? Why or why not?
4. How would you finish this question, "I think my parents are:
 - a. overly protective."
 - b. just about right."
 - c. under protective."
 - d. don't think about it."



Focus on Prayer

Pray that:

1. God will guard your teen's heart and mind every day as they are bombarded with decisions that will affect the rest of their lives.
2. God will give you patience and wisdom to deal with your teen when they mess up.
3. God will protect you from the enemy who says you are a bad parent when your teen makes a bad decision.
4. God will give you a desire to live a holy and blameless life in front of your family.

Verse of the month

"Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."
Hebrews 12:10-11 (NIV)

The truth is no one likes to be disciplined, but as parents, we know it is sometimes even harder to be the disciplinarian. Many parents would rather be liked by their teen than be the one to follow through with consequences. Our teens need and WANT boundaries and discipline. Discipline is for our own good. We all know that discipline is not fun when it is happening. But it is the RESULTS that we are praying for and looking forward to every day, that our children could grow up to "produce a harvest of righteousness and peace." This would be a blessing better than anything we could ask for or imagine.



Did you know...

- * The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health surveyed 11,572 teenagers to determine which factors were most helpful in preventing harmful behavior, such as violence, suicide, substance abuse, early sexual behavior and teen pregnancy. Here's what the researchers found: The presence of parents is beneficial at four key times of the day — early morning, after school, dinnertime and bedtime. (family.org)
- * Over half of teenagers will experiment with alcohol, and roughly 40% of teenagers will try drugs at least once. The flipside is that 50% will not use alcohol and 60% will not use drugs. (medicinenet.com)
- * The Cincinnati Children's Hospital Center surveyed 527 teenagers to learn what family and lifestyle characteristics were related to mental health and adjustment. They found that adolescents whose parents ate dinner with them five times per week or more were the least likely to be on drugs, to be depressed or to be in trouble with the law. (family.org)
- * While nearly a quarter of teen respondents said their parents don't seem to have enough time to spend with them, the majority of the parents surveyed did not report having struggles with finding enough time to spend with their kids. This disconnect may be the result of parents underestimating the amount of time their kids want and need from adults. (connectwithkids.com)

Music alternative

Stacie Orrico began her musical career in 1998 at a Christian Colorado music festival. She "inadvertently entered the high stakes talent competition, and won." She was discovered at that time by a Forefront executive and eventually signed with Forefront Music. Her first album released in 2000 and reached gold certification. Her follow up album in 2003 became a success on both the Christian and secular charts. Her next crossover album, "Beautiful Awakening" is scheduled to release in January 2007. For more information about Stacie and her music, check out www.stacieorrico.com.

trends

AOL and the Associated Press have found some interesting trends in Instant Messaging (IM):

* Almost half of teens (13-18)--48%--use instant messaging. That's more than twice the percentage of adults who use it.

* More than half of the teens who use instant messaging send more than 25 a day, and 1 in 5 sends more than 100. Three-fourths of adult users send fewer than 25 instant messages a day. (chicagotribune.com)

musicspotlight



Albums:

"The Dutchess" - 9/2006

Singles:

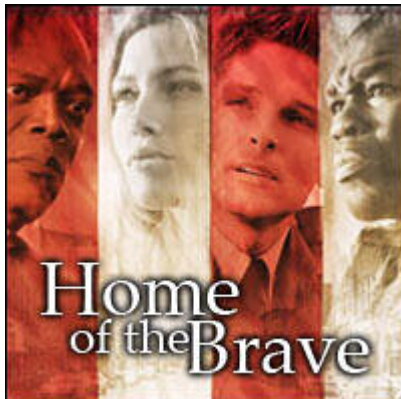
"Fergalicious" - 11/2006

"London Bridge" - 7/2006

Background: Stacy "Fergie" Ferguson got her first major break as a child on the TV show Kids Incorporated which led to voice overs and commercials. She is now a Grammy Award-winning pop, R&B singer/actress. After the show, she fronted an all girl trio called Wild Orchid which broke up after its third album. "Her disappointment with Wild Orchid led to an addiction to crystal methamphetamine (ecstasy)." Now a recovering addict, she went public with the information in 2006. In 2003, Fergie took the lead female vocal role for The Black Eyed Peas. After two hit BEP albums, Fergie went solo with "The Dutchess." wikipedia.com

What parents should know: Her music, scantily clad clothing, and dance moves are very sexual and suggestive. She is also known for her crazy antics as evidenced in her urinating on stage in 2005 after "having a few drinks before the show." Her album contains a Parental Advisory.

Parent Q&A: "Pedestal" is a song which answers back to people who "don't do anything with their lives but stay on the Internet for hours...and rip me apart." It asks, "What are you doing with your life?" rollingstone.com Q: Can words hurt anybody? Why? Why do you think Fergie cares about what other people think?



filmwatch

The new 2007 movies have some big-name music stars trying their talents on the big screen.

TITLE	RATING	RED FLAGS	GENRE	STARRING
Alpha Dog	R	For pervasive drug use and language, strong violence, sexuality and nudity	Drama	Justin Timberlake, Sharon Stone
Code Name: The Cleaner	PG-13	For sexual content, crude humor and some violence	Comedy	Cedric the Entertainer, Lucy Liu
Home of the Brave	R	For war violence and language	Drama	Samuel L. Jackson, 50 Cent, Jessica Biel