

7

Have stamina and never give up on your child. In my experience this is perhaps the most critical factor for parents and it almost always translates into healthy relationships with your children in the post-teen years.

6

It is hard being a kid today. Although it is also probably true that our kids have it easier than we did in some ways. I know of virtually no one who would voluntarily return to high school. It is nice to sometimes let your child know that it is tough being a teen.

5

Only fight about the top 3 issues. Let the other stuff go. In my house, my daughter's room was a disaster, but it was not in my top 3, so I let it go. If you fight about all of the issues, you will be fighting all of the time --- not exactly what we or they want.

4

Get into their world. In fact, the TV show "The Secret Life of An American Teen" was poorly reviewed, yet was the highest viewed show ever on ABC Family as teens flocked to see this. Try watching shows like "The Family Guy" (or other shows your teen watches) with an open mind.

3

Ask other parents for help and advice. You will be amazed at what you will learn. In addition, please seek professional help when needed. Some of the bravest and most caring parents are the ones who know when to access outside assistance.

2

Allow your child to make mistakes. Be glad that they do so when they are in middle and high school, so that you can support them in this learning process.

1

Take them away for a day. Here is what you do. Tell them that you will be showing up at school one day and will tell the main office staff that your child needs to be dismissed and will not be returning for the day. Then do something fun like skiing, go into Boston, or have lunch and see a movie. Do not have an agenda regarding what to talk about, just have fun together.

When you go home tonight, please give your child a hug (if they will allow) and tell them that you have no idea how they handle and balance so much --- and that you are impressed !

Written by:

Jon Mattleman, MS Counseling

E-mail: jonmattleman@gmail.com

Website: www.jonmattleman.com

Twitter: www.twitter.com/jonmattleman