

Boys to men

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By BECKY ANDREWS, *Wilson Living Magazine*

I am the mother of boys; two of them. When they were babies, I worried, A LOT. I knew everything about these little creatures. Their likes and dislikes, their bedtime and naptime. I knew the difference between a hungry cry and sick cry.

I knew what made them giggle uncontrollably and what story they liked before bed. Never before had the frequency and consistency of bowel movements been so important. I was a pro. Then they started growing up. And just when we'd tackle one obstacle, like potty training, a new one would present itself.

No matter how old they are, I will always be their mother. As much as I'd like to make believe I will be there for them, I know there will come a day when my boys have to bid me adieu forever. That day will come and there's nothing we can do about it. It will likely come before I'm ready and still have advice that will prepare them for the world.

So to that end (no pun intended), I'd like to give my boys some advice to refer to when I'm no longer here to preach it.

- Do not look to your father for style advice. Trust me. This is the same man who saw nothing wrong with putting you in a pair of size 3 pants when you were 7. If you have a question about what you need to wear, do yourself a favor and call one of mommy's friends- Erin Brown preferably.
- Don't be afraid to cry- but not too much. It's barbaric to think that just because a person is born with a certain chromosome count they should cease from showing emotion. Just don't overdo it. There's a long list of televangelists and politicians who have taken weeping to extreme and lost credibility and became the punch line with well known comedians.

- When you decide to settle down with a special someone, don't stop doing the things we taught you how to do like laundry, loading the dishwasher, vacuuming and-- this is a biggie-- putting your dirty clothes in the hamper. And take your sweetheart on monthly dates no matter how long you've been together.
- Don't stay mad- at anybody. It just hurts you, not the person you're mad at.
- Tell the truth, even if you think a lie might be easier. Trustworthiness is a valuable commodity but once it's questioned, could be gone forever.
- When you're having a bad day, don't wallow. Sometimes it helps to talk about it. Call your dad. He's the best listener. Or talk to me. I'll always be here in spirit. The best part is I won't talk back.
- Stay in touch with your brother. There is no other person in this world who will get the inside jokes of your mom and dad. This is the boy you played ball with and will be the man you lean on when dad and I are both gone.
- More than anything else, remember I love you. You are the best thing that ever happened to me and your dad.

This list is subject to change as you get older and I get wiser but for now this should do.

Love, Mom

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