Teenage Land

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There is something very scary about the crossover from 12 years old into "teenage land." Not for the child – ahem – young man of course. He's elated. Even though this new milestone has very little impact on anything in his life as far as rules for bedtime and social schedule goes. Besides the number itself, the only noticeable change is the tone in his voice and facial expressions when me or his dad talk to him about... ANYTHING. In the span of one year, it seems this oldest child of mine has inherited the entire world's wisdom.

Our conversations as of late go something like this:

Mom: "Turn the TV down; I could hear it when I pulled into the garage."

Teenager: no response. In fact, I don't think he even notices me standing beside him.

Mom: "Hey! Turn the television down!" This startles him.

Teenager: "Alright! You don't have to yell at me! It was this loud when I turned it on. Why do you blame me for everything?" This is always followed with a very exaggerated eye roll.

Dad: "Put your iPod and phone away at the table."

Teenager: There's no response because our teenager has ear phones in and can't hear. He looks up when he feels us looking at him, smiles and goes right back to texting his friend he was just with 30 minutes ago. So my husband tried again in a much louder voice.

Dad: "I said, 'put your iPod and phone away.' If I have to ask you one more time, we're taking it away."

As he pulls his earphones out, our newly minted teenager gives us that, "I am so moving out when I turn 18" look and goes on to lose his both devices anyway because of that little look. Some kids just have to learn the hard way that WE (parents) have every right to take away anything WE paid for if the owner (teenager) is acting like an ungrateful little twit.

The personality difference between girls and boys is even clearer in this teen stage. While my friends are taking their daughters to get pedicures or see the latest Nicholas Sparks movie, I struggle to get a response outside of "huh," "nuh uh" or "I don't know" from my teen.

There will come a day when we will all laugh at the "fun stuff" our teens put us through. For now it's just easier to recognize that "teenager" is that dreadful stage in life that's responsible for causing/giving parents premature gray hair, ulcers, weight gain, acne, and in some extreme cases, mental disorders. And the reason we do all this? So one day we can say to our child what our parents said to us long ago... "I hope you have a child just like you!"

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