

PARENT-TEEN EYE-OPENER

Here's an idea that helps young people see that the struggle they may be having with their parents isn't all their parents' fault. It can be a real eye-opener for the kids, and can prove to be a good peacemaker in the midst of family strife.

Pass out a 3x5 card to each person. Then have them draw a line down the middle of the card and write MOM above one column and DAD above the other. Tell the kids that they will be asked 10 questions, and they are to answer them separately for the mothers and fathers. They must grade their parents on a scale of 1 to 10, with one being the lowest or worst possible grade and 10 being the highest or best. Here are the questions:

1. Do your parents show you affection?
2. Do your parents listen to you?
3. Do your parents talk with you about schoolwork? Your interests? Your boy/girlfriend?
4. Do your parents trust you?
5. Do your parents respect you?
6. Do your parents initiate leisure activities that involve you (shopping, camping tennis, walks)?
7. Do your parents treat your friends the way you want them to be treated?
8. Do your parents always have a settled opinion about things? (a one indicates they do, a 10 means they don't)
9. Do your parents respect your privacy?
10. Do your parents treat you the way you want to be treated?

After both parents have been graded on these points, you will want to discuss the kids' answers on a few random questions. What usually follows is a discussion of all the things parents do wrong. But the real key to this exercise is the next step. After the discussion have the kids turn their cards over, and again make two columns with the headings MOM and DAD. But this time they are to grade themselves, using the same questions turned around. (For example: Do you show your mom affection? Your dad?) In this way they can think about their relationships to both their mothers and fathers. The young people will likely see that, in many cases, their attitudes toward their parents are very similar to their parents' attitudes toward them. Close the discussion by having the kids think of ways they can improve the relationships they have with their parents.

Culture Shock

PARENTS: OBTAIN THE SIGNATURE OF A TEENAGER WHO—

- _____ Does not listen to (local radio station).
- _____ Knows the name of Ward and June Cleaver's son.
- _____ Has never used roller blades.
- _____ Knows who sang "Go Away, Little Girl."
- _____ Believes Michael Jackson really is "history."
- _____ Has never been to a drive-in movie.
- _____ Thinks Elvis lives.
- _____ Reads the newspaper regularly.
- _____ Knows Cher's first husband's name.
- _____ Thinks school dances are boring.
- _____ Eats pizza less than once a week.
- _____ Prefers reading to watching TV.
- _____ Thinks a girl should never ask a guy out.
- _____ Doesn't like Janet Jackson.
- _____ Is considering going into the same line of work that a parent is in.
- _____ Has never been to Disney World.

TEENS: OBTAIN THE SIGNATURE OF A PARENT WHO—

- _____ Used to wear bell bottoms.
- _____ Went to school in a one-room schoolhouse.
- _____ Knows who sang "Gangsta's Paradise."
- _____ Used to grease his hair.
- _____ Still greases his hair.
- _____ Was an authentic flower child.
- _____ Thinks Elvis lives.
- _____ Wrecked a parent's car.
- _____ Used to have a crew cut or used to iron her hair.
- _____ Attended Woodstock.
- _____ Wore leisure suits.
- _____ Likes to play video games.
- _____ Drove a VW bus.
- _____ Went to a Beatles concert.
- _____ Remembers where they were when President Kennedy was shot.
- _____ Liked the Tony Orlando and Dawn show.
- _____ Stuck their tongue to a flagpole.