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quiz

Do You Know Your Teen?

Are you up-to-date on your kid's life? Take this quiz and see.
 by Camille Noe Pagán

You So Know Your Teen!

You are an absolutely approachable parent who your kid knows she can talk to (and even fight with) and you're there to listen. Just remember, your adolescent may not always want to be around you, but that doesn't mean she doesn't love or need you, says Susan Smith Kuczmarski, Ed.D., author of *Sacred Flight of the Teenager: A Parent's Guide to Stepping Back and Letting Go*. "Teens go through periods where they want to be alone, or with their friends," says Smith Kuczmarski. "Make it clear that you're there for her always, and she'll seek you out during the tough times."

You scored 7 out of 7

1. You think teenagers should:

In-touch-with-your-teen answer: b. Be spoken to like adults, even if they don't have the same privileges and responsibilities.
 You answered: b

"Your teen is figuring out how to be an adult, and she'll appreciate you speaking to her as an individual with valid thoughts and feelings," says Smith Kuczmarski. "You'll also find that you enjoy her company more when you do." A little respect can go a long way in getting her to open up to you about her life.

2. True or false: You know most of your teen's friends' names, as well as where they live and what they look like.

In-touch-with-your-teen answer: a. True.
 You answered: a

Your teen's buddies can have a huge impact on her

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Meet Allison DuBois (Patricia Arquette). When she's not chauffeuring the three kids, cooking her family's meals or trying to find time for her hubby, she's talking to dead people and using her psychic abilities to solve crimes. Talk about a busy mom! Premieres Sunday, March 26 at 11 pm et/pt.

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relationships talk

Express Yourself
 "It may sound goofy but my sister and my mom are my best friends. My sister had her son 5 months ago and I can't imagine

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— BeachBlond79,
Lifetimtv.com
community member

day-to-day life and the choices she makes, which is why it's key to know as much as you can about them, says deLara. "Invite them over, talk to your kid about them, talk to their parents," advises deLara. "The more you learn, the more in touch with your child you'll be."

3. Which of the following is *least* likely to happen over dinner at your house?

In-touch-with-your-teen answer: c. You eat on the run and don't see your family.

You answered: c

You can't connect with your teen if you're never around, points out Smith Kuczmarski. "If you have to work, or have other obligations, that's OK — but you need to make sure that when you are home, you're engaging with your teen. Dinner is a great time to do that."

4. If your daughter came to you crying about just failing a big test, you would:

In-touch-with-your-teen answer: a. Not be totally surprised. You knew your child was struggling with the subject matter.

You answered: a

If you know your teen well, you're aware of the areas that she has trouble with in school — so bad grades or failing a test shouldn't be a shock. "If you honestly didn't know that your child was having trouble with a certain class, spend more time finding out about the lesson plans, and figure out how you can help," suggests deLara.

5. True or false: Your child has approached you to talk about sex, drugs, smoking or body-image issues.

In-touch-with-your-teen answer: a. True.

You answered: a

One sign that your teen truly trusts you is that she's talked to you about especially touchy topics such as sex, drugs, alcohol, smoking and the like. What if she hasn't? "Approach her," advises deLara. "You want her to know that you're aware that these are issues she's faced with, and that you're willing to talk through them when she's ready."

6. When you and your teen are fighting, and she is really upset, you:

In-touch-with-your-teen answer: b. Let your teen vent — and then talk, after she has let it all out.

You answered: b

"Asking your kid to keep it all inside means denying her the opportunity to learn how to deal with her emotions," Smith Kuczmarski says. "On the other hand, allowing her to let it out — even if it comes

out in a messy way — shows that you believe her feelings are valid. She'll be more likely to start sharing those feelings with you instead of blowing up."

7. Which of the following do you not know about?

In-touch-with-your-teen answer: d. You know all of the above.

You answered: d

Time spent learning what your teen likes, what she spends her time doing and what her hopes and dreams are is time well spent, stresses deLara. "If it's an activity, like a sport, go to the practices or games. If it's an interest, like music or video games, ask about it — and listen when she answers," she says. "Show her you're interested and you'll be surprised at how much she tells you."

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