

insights



You can say no to teenagers. Here's why

by Michael Grose



Two mums came to me recently, fretting over a decision they had to make.

Their daughters, who had both just turned 13, had asked for permission to go on a Saturday night party bus with over forty 16- and 17-year-olds.

The two girls put huge pressure on their mothers to let them go – pester power had been alive and well in their homes in the preceding days. However both mums admitted that the alarm bells were ringing and they didn't feel good about letting their daughters go on the party bus. It was the first time they had been put on the spot in such a way so they sought my advice.

My response was simple and straightforward: “Say NO!”

The age gap between the girls and the rest of the party, their experience gap and the mothers' lack of knowledge about who was attending and the exact nature of supervision were the main issues. Both girls are in the early stages of adolescence where they think they are three years older than they are. It is an age where they tread a fine line between child and emergent teen.

The emergent teen desperately wants to act 'older' and be older than they are. The child wants to be protected and have their parents decide for them.

So what did the mums decide?

Despite their gut instincts both mums let their kids join the Saturday night party bus. Fortunately, their kids showed some common sense!

The young teens didn't like what they saw when their parents dropped them off to start the evening. They didn't feel safe so they returned home with their parents. After all their fuss they didn't go after all!

There are three salient lessons from this scenario

First, it was evident that these mothers didn't feel confident enough to assert their authority over their daughters. They were confused about how they should respond even when their gut instinct was giving them a strong message. Their job was to keep their daughters safe and their gut instincts told them that this situation was unsuitable for their daughters.

Second, like many parents they were working in isolation. Despite the fact that they were good friends it wasn't until the morning of the party that they spoke to each other. By this time their daughters' pestering had worked a treat. Next time they should call for second, third and fourth opinions.

Third, as both these girls were the eldest in their families it was the first real experience for both parents of the adolescent push for independence. The parents were unaware of the developmental stages of adolescence and the approach that is needed in each stage. They were flying blind and this is not a good way to raise teens.

Lack of basic knowledge about teen development, confusion about the best approach to take with kids at this age and solitary decision making were the real issues here for the parents.

There is nothing like experience but it helps to have an understanding about teen development, a knowledge about the best approach to raising teens and a number of allies and friends whom you can swap ideas with and – more importantly – draw strength from when your resolve and patience are put to the test.

And of course, you can just say NO!



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About the webinar

Let's face it, many discipline measures of the past just don't cut it anymore. That doesn't mean that raising respectful, well-behaved and cooperative kids isn't important. In this era of digital distraction, shifting society norms and changing attitudes toward authority, discipline has just become a whole lot harder. In this webinar, experienced parenting educator Michael Grose will share the best of his tried and true techniques to help you get more cooperation and better behaviour from even the most challenging kids.

In this webinar you'll learn:

- the parenting style that's best suited to raising cooperative, well-behaved and successful kids in the 21st Century
- the most important question to ask yourself when kids repeatedly misbehave, that will lead to behavioural improvement
- an easy-to-apply approach to help you get more cooperation from kids without repeating yourself, raising your voice or bringing kids to tears
- a practical definition of misbehaviour that you can use in any situation
- two types of consequences to use to get more responsible behaviour and the secret to making them stick
- when kids need to be listened to and when their behaviour needs managing.

When

Tuesday 14 August 2018 7:30 PM – 8:30 PM AEST

Catch up available: If you can't make the scheduled webinar time, you don't have to miss out — simply register for it and a recording will be made available for you to catch up anytime. This recording will be available to everyone who registers, which also means those who attend can listen to it more than once.

Price

This webinar is \$37 per person to attend, and is free of charge to families at schools that have a Parenting Ideas membership.

How to use the voucher

1. Go to www.parentingideas.com.au/product/win-kids-cooperation-without-fears-tears-cauliflower-ears/
2. Click 'Add to cart' and proceed to the cart when you are ready.
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Guest Speaker: Michael Grose

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Michael Grose, founder of Parenting Ideas, is one of Australia's leading parenting educators. He's the author of 10 books for parents including *Thriving!* and the best-selling *Why First Borns Rule the World* and *Last Borns Want to Change It*, and his latest release *Spoonfed Generation: How to raise independent children*.