



## HOMESCHOOLING HIGH SCHOOL WITH MEREDITH!

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### HOW TO KNOW IF THERE ARE TEENAGERS LIVING IN YOUR HOUSE

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What happened to your little girl who loved to twirl around in your old prom dress and high heels? What happened to the little boy who would bring you flowers that many in the world would consider weeds? Have they entered the teen years? How did that happen? Here's how to know if there's a teenager living in your house.



Food disappears in massive amounts and your grocery budget doubles. Didn't you just go grocery shopping? What happened to the chips, ice cream, sandwich meat, bread, popcorn, grits, fruit, and crackers? And, by the way, where did the leftovers from last night go?

Your cell phone has a million snapshots of their faces at odd angles. Oh, that's it! They are holding the camera out and taking their own picture.

There is not a sound at 9 am...or 10 am...or 11 am. Are these the same creatures that woke you before dawn, interrupted your Quiet Times, and pulled back your eyelids to see if you were awake?

They take naps in the late afternoon, just a few hours after they wake up, complaining that they've been up "since early this morning." Are these the same little ones you had to beg or threaten to take a nap.

They open up and pour out their hearts to you or their father only after 1 am when you can barely keep your eyes open, their faces look fuzzy, and you are just longing for bed. But you realize that this is the "magic moment" the books talk about so you fix yourself a cup of coffee and hunker down for a heart-to-heart chat.

They are so independent until they desperately need something from you. Then they seem so very young again.

They open doors for you and carry the groceries in because "those are too heavy for you, Mom." You bite your lip, refusing to remind them that you carried them around for three years on your hip while cooking dinner and doing laundry.

They can understand and operate all of the technology in your home (computers, cell phones, stereos, televisions, ipods, PDAs, laptops) and are constantly giving you instructions on how to program one of them or do something new. They show you a million things that your cell phone can do and you can't remember any of them.

They sometimes say things that they don't mean. Sometimes these things are unkind, even cruel and self-centered. In fact, even the most godly of teenagers, tends to be more self-centered during these years.

They are always texting. Does anyone talk on the phone anymore? Apparently not.

Their dreams for their future jobs, homes, and marriages are so idealistic. You realize that life is just not like that for anyone, but you just can bring yourself to tell them. You remember all the idealistic plans you had too.

Their emotions are like a roller coaster: up and down. After a long crying spell, they bounce up and ask for a ride to the mall.

They can become easily embarrassed, especially when a member of the opposite sex is around.

They struggle to serve Jesus on their own, rather than as your child. They ask hard questions and thoughtfully consider the answers you give. Sometimes they blow it.

They are filled with emotion and passion. They produce beautiful poetry, songs, paintings, essays, stories, or other works of art. They dream big!

They desperately want your love, acceptance, and respect. You are their heroine, even when they don't tell you. So, don't pull away or let them drift away from you. Hold them tight during these years--they need you so much. Get into the Word of God with them, teaching them and discussing Scripture regularly. Pray with them and for them. Ask them what you can pray for. Minister with them--find some kind of ministry or act of service that you can do together, whether it's a soup kitchen, the worship team, ushering, or teaching Sunday School. Hang out with your teens and enjoy it. Tell them how proud you are of them and how much you enjoy being with them. Get to know their friends and hang out with them too. Don't forget to mentor them, teaching them everything that Jesus has taught you!

*"Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother'--which is the first commandment with a promise--'that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on earth. Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.'" (Ephesians 6:1 NIV)*

Remember that your teens are still children in the process of becoming adults. Train and instruct them! Most of all, love and enjoy them--these year pass quickly.

