

Moreheal@heal-online.org [New Post](#) [Design](#) [Sign Out](#)

heal blog

Friday, June 14, 2019

How Would You Handle My Out of Control Teen?

How Would You Handle My Out of Control Teen?

by Angela Smith, HEAL National Coordinator/Co-Founder

The title question is one I get asked often as national coordinator and co-founder of HEAL. I've also been asked "Do you have children?" And, the answer to that one is no, because injuries I've sustained make the chances I can even conceive astronomical. But, I do have a certificate in Child Development from the Kent School District in Washington State, a lot of higher education, and have spent my life as an advocate, teacher, and more working with children and youth. I passed the Washington Educator Skills Test with over 90%. So, while I haven't by accident or on purpose become pregnant and brought a child into the world that I later might neglect or fail to discipline effectively due to my own narcissism or self-absorption as some who contact me for assistance experience, I do know a few things about the law (also passed the California First Year Law Student's Exam aka Baby Bar) and child development.

So, back to the title question... I usually respond asking what they mean by "out of control". Sometimes it is reportedly disrespectful back talk or leaving the dinner table without permission. Sometimes it is reportedly bringing home the Torah for a class assignment to a home that doesn't permit Jewish literature even if it was part of a school assignment for social studies. Sometimes it is something more serious like taking the family car without permission or using controlled substances. One parent reported that their child was violent. I asked what they meant by that. They said, "He left the dinner table in a huff because I wouldn't give him permission to go to the football game with friends. He slammed the chair back into place against the table and went to his room and slammed the door." I don't find that violent and felt that parent was a narcissist who exaggerated claims of violence for sympathy. Slamming a door isn't violence unless you do it on someone and on purpose catching one of their limbs in the door. That would be violence. At least, that's my opinion.

Blog Archive

- ▼ **2019** (26)
 - ▶ **July** (4)
 - ▼ **June** (13)
 - You May Not Be As Dissatisfied With The Government...**
 - "So, You Don't Like My Tone..."**
 - A Failure To Communicate...**
 - How I Became Aware of Sacred Breath Academy**
 - Anger and Despair Management for Traumatic Stress ...**
 - This Happened....**
 - How HEAL Identifies and Defines Cults**
 - Is Sacred Breath Academy A Cult?**
 - The Arguable Hypocrisies of HEAL**
 - How Would You Handle My Out of Control Teen?**
 - Why Do Some People Hate Activists?**
 - Is Angela Smith A Hypocrite? For The Sake of Justice**
 - ▶ **May** (2)
 - ▶ **April** (2)
 - ▶ **March** (1)
 - ▶ **February** (2)
 - ▶ **January** (2)
- ▶ **2018** (25)
- ▶ **2017** (10)
- ▶ **2016** (10)
- ▶ **2015** (4)
- ▶ **2014** (9)
- ▶ **2013** (3)
- ▶ **2012** (14)
- ▶ **2011** (10)

If by "out of control" teen, you mean a teen who is establishing their personal autonomy and exploring more authority over their own lives that is age appropriate, then perhaps they've matured a bit early and establishing more responsibility to go with their new found autonomy and independent spirit is your best bet. So, assuming they've done nothing criminal, help put them on a fast track to emancipation. Acknowledge the teen has an independent spirit and you can see that. Let them know to support their independent spirit and passion for autonomy you want to help them prepare for independent living, the sooner the better. That should get their attention. Then, establish a fee for room and board with a curfew. College dorm rooms for adults have a curfew of 10pm-1am.[1] So, if you set the curfew for 10pm that's no different than for independent young adults living in dorms at college. Advise them of the laws in your state regarding truancy and that violation of said laws could result in both you and they being punished by the courts. "In 2014, a mother in Pennsylvania named Eileen DeNino died in jail, having been imprisoned for failing to pay fines for her children's truancy." [2] This will establish that you have a common interest in their attending school to avoid any legalities or undesired institutionalization and fines. And, let them know the rules of college dorms for young adults. You can find a list of said rules for independent young adults here: <https://dean.williams.edu/student-handbook/dorm-room-policies/>. Let your teen know you are willing to let them continue living at home if they can show they are responsible enough to act like a college student. Since they are still in school, that shouldn't be too difficult. Require they get a job or give them a chore equivalent for the benefits of room and board they may receive from you. Establish penalties for failure to pay on time like late fees or what would be commonly required for any late payments. Harvard has a zero-tolerance policy for late rent on dorms.[3] So, permitting a late payment option with a late fee (typically 5% of the rent for the month if late) would be what an autonomous young adult would pay. And, encourage your teen to be independent and prepare for independent living with your support. This will mean they are responsible for all their own laundry and whatever else a young adult is responsible for who is independent of supervision on life decisions.

If your teen can't handle that discussion and becomes whiny wanting you to just take care of everything for them and let them do whatever they want too, let them know they are acting like a toddler and may end up being treated like one as a result. Teens can't demand autonomy and independence while simultaneously refusing any responsibility for themselves, the concepts negate each other. You either have autonomy with responsibility or relative autonomy to your responsibility, but, you can't be autonomous and irresponsible in life as an adult without running the risk of being homeless or

About Me



HEAL

HEAL is an egalitarian network of activists self-empowered to plan events, create change, and make the world a better place for all life. Our goals include the liberation of humans, nonhuman animals, and the earth! We work in cooperation with like-minded organizations that put compassion in action!

[View my complete profile](#)

institutionalized in some capacity. Read any law enforcement blotter for proof of that fact or crime section in the daily paper.

If your teen is intrigued and ready to work with you, work with them and help them get ready for independent living. They'll be more prepared for college or work as a result and you'll be happier too.

Now, if your young adult is committing crimes, including experimentation with controlled substances, let them know it is illegal and they could go to jail. Parents can go to jail for any parties at their home where kids are using controlled substances even if done without their knowledge or consent.^[4] So, again, that situation creates an unreasonable legal liability risk for the parents. But, warning them of the dangers, discussing responsibility, and letting them know if they are caught they will go to jail which would break your heart should help if your child isn't a sociopath and actually cares about any unforeseen harm they may cause you just "having a good time with friends". So, if they are a sociopath that maybe at age 4 years old refused time-out, moved a baby gate putting their baby brother's life at risk, and showed no remorse when it resulted in possible serious injury to the brother and things just got worse as they grew older, then HEAL concedes exile to a segregated setting is likely where they will end up. But, to avoid the aftermath or being sued or charged for private placement segregation without a court order, because of some narcissism where you'd rather brag about "boarding school" than explain your kid's too much like you which you enjoyed when he/she was little, but, now with autonomy kicking in you don't enjoy dealing with someone so much like yourself so you find a way to save face before the law intervenes and hope it works while ignoring all evidence to the contrary like a delusional narcissist, it is actually best if you wait for law enforcement to make an arrest so the government is to blame and you save face with your kid without putting them in a position to have you arrested or sue you for violating their rights segregating them without a court order. (See "The TRUTH" article at <http://www.heal-online.org/abm.htm> and other pages of our website for more details and cited sources.)

Many courts are fairly lenient on first-time offenders depending on nature of crime. And, the odds are any time before a judge who sternly says "Because it is your first offense, I'm sentencing you to community service and probation. If I see you in my court again, you'll go to prison and wish you had community service again. Are we understood?" In a court, that's intimidating for everyone even adults. So, if your teen isn't a sociopath then that should work without your placing them in any private prison setting or facility that accepts adjudicated youth. But, again, if they are a sociopath, if you want to give the police an anonymous tip about your own kid's criminal activities, that's your business. And, that's how I'd recommend handling it so you avoid potential legal

liability. Sociopaths are fairly unforgiving and what goes on in such facilities gives them so much ammo they will destroy you when they get out. It's best to do things the right way even if you feel it might cause embarrassment in the short-term. You can always use it as a sob story and tell your friends about the tragic life of your criminal teen and how you have no idea how they turned out that way while they buy you something nice to cheer you up.

I don't believe sociopathic tendencies are genetic. I believe they are due to a lack of discipline. I don't know where the mother heard it, but, one mother said "Experts say any discipline is abuse to a child". I don't know what experts she consulted but it was not anyone at HEAL. We live in a world where if you violate the social contract (i.e. laws, regulations, rules, etc) you at worst get the death penalty. It does a horrific disservice to children to think of discipline as abuse as well as to call abuse (i.e. beatings, "corrective" rape, etc) discipline. Discipline is about teaching and learning which is best done by example and with words. And, time-out actually works like a mini-jail sentence. So, HEAL supports the use of time-out on small children where it is age appropriate (not isolation for days, 1 minute per each year of age with a reasonable discussion on what happened and why it was ill-advised or likely to result in penalty in other settings besides home) and with older children or teens, that's been covered above.

I love children, youth, everyone really. I've worked with children in many settings. I promise everyone that discipline is necessary and you wouldn't want a world of people who lack self-discipline and respect for others. Am I wrong? Self-discipline doesn't just happen, you have to lead by example and often parents who lack self-discipline have children who do the same. Don't use the kid as a scapegoat for your own failures, take some responsibility yourself and lead by example. Your kid might surprise you and actually appreciate that.

[1] <https://www.stateuniversity.com/blog/permalink/College-Dorm-Curfews-Useless-and-Contradictory-Restrictions.html>

[2] <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/jan/31/kamala-harris-laughed-jailing-parents-truancy>

[3] <http://huhousing.harvard.edu/apply/application-process/payment-info>

[4] <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/when-kids-call-the-shots/201902/parents-can-be-arrested-their-kids-house-party>

Posted by **HEAL** at **12:33 AM**

no comments:

Post a Comment

[Newer Post](#)

[Home](#)

[Older Post](#)