

Are We Training Teenage Girls To Be Great Deceivers? **by Debra Beck**

I read all these articles about keeping a close eye on our teens, to make sure they aren't making any bad decisions and they are safe. I listen to parents discussing the same issues. How close is too close and what are we teaching our teens, without even knowing it? We read her journal, get on to her My Space account, and listen in on her private telephone calls. Are we sending a message that we care or are we sending a message that we don't trust our kids?

**There's a fine line between trusting your teenage girls
and staying attentive to their safety**

The first thing you are teaching her is that honoring some one's privacy isn't that big of a deal, if you really need to know something. You are also teaching her how to become an expert liar and a good deceiver. She will learn how to become really sneaky, because the more she knows you are doing these things, the better she will get at learning how to hide them from you. When you push up against something or someone, there is no choice but to get stronger. That's the way things work. If you are protesting something, the side that is being protested has to get stronger to stay alive. We don't want to help our teen practice these behaviors. We want to help them make good decisions for themselves.

**To trust our teens, we must first understand that
they are teens, and honor their privacy.**

Give them the room to be teens, and give them the guidance to learn how to become responsible adults. These teenage years are the years that they are starting to pull away, testing their own boundaries. Don't push them away more by being a parent that expects them not to be a teen, and will do anything to make sure that they are not behaving like one.

**Be a good role model to your teenage girl: you wouldn't
want her peeking in on your private life.
Don't peek in on hers either.**

Looking at their journal, checking their My Space account and any other sneaky behaviors will push them away from you. Then they are on their own to make decisions which they may not be capable of making. To be available for them you have to understand them and respect them. Just because they are younger doesn't mean they do not deserve to be respected. We need to help them to become adults who make good decisions for themselves.

By respecting them we help them become respectful adults as well. We want to set a good example, through being a good role model, so decide next time before you peek in places your teen might prefer you didn't what kind of role model you want to be? Ultimately this will be more valuable than anything you could come across.