

Things you wish your parents had told you

By Amy Rose
staff writer

As a grown-up, do you now wish your parents had told you something about life during your childhood that you could have really used?

Did you ever hear the classic "Don't cross your eyes, they'll stay like that," or "Make sure you wear a clean pair of underwear because you might get into an accident and have to go to the hospital?"

Instead, do you wish they had told you the prime lending rate would rise considerably, so buy a house now, or never join a record club that offers 10 albums for a penny, because the albums you get stink, and

they send you one every month C.O.D. whether you want one or not? Well, even if they had known of those two bits of wisdom, chances are they wouldn't have told you anyway. Why? "Because I never listened to anything my parents told me when I was growing up," as one 25-year-old Troy hair dresser said.

A random and terribly unscientific survey of folks out and about the metro area confirmed the fact that many children simply don't listen to their parents' advice.

But now that the up-and-coming supplies are older and wiser, a lot of them wish they had been told certain things, or just wish they had paid

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Birmingham

better attention to what was said.

"I wish they had told me that men are jerks!" said Lori Ballard, a 22-

year-old sales clerk in Southfield.

WHEN ASKED if she was referring to anyone in particular, she said, "My boyfriend." Then, after a pause, she said dreamily, "I don't know why I still see him — I guess I'm in love. . . ."

Mike Clark, 29, of Birmingham, wishes he too had been given some advice for his love life. "I should have been told not to get involved with a woman who wears more than one earring in one ear," he said laughing, but completely serious.

"They are semi-wild types. You know, chic, off-the-wall. They expect too much out of you," he explained, but declined to reveal more about the jewelry-lobed lady who helped form his opinion.

Cathy McGillacuddy, a 22-year-old cashier from Lathrup Village said she wished her parents had told her the truth about a favorite pet's demise — an incident that plagued her for nearly two weeks of her childhood.

"When I was 10, my cat had to be put to sleep because it was biting people. But my parents told me it ran away," Cathy explained. "I really wish they would have let me know about it, because I used to look for it all the time — what a lot of wasted energy."

Cathy's parents brought her a new cat two weeks later, she said.

Steven Odums, 22 and a student at Oakland Community College in Rochester, said he wished he had listened better when his mother told him not to go into the army.

"She told me, but I didn't listen," he said of his three years in the service. "Boy, I wish would have, because now I'd be a lot further along in college. Oh well, you live and you learn."

JEFF BLAKESLEE, a 20-year-old video store clerk in Southfield, said he would have liked some input from his parents on financing college. "I wish they had told me I had to pay for school before it came time to go," said the MSU student who admitted to blowing summer savings

before he was hit with the tab. "I guess each thought the other was going to foot the bill."

The most popular piece of advice folks complained was lacking from their childhoods was, of course, the old adage "Life isn't fair." "Well it isn't," said Charles Johnson, 20, of Beverly Hills. "Sometimes things just don't go your way and you have to handle them. I guess no one can really tell you that, you have to learn it for yourself."

So there you have it. Maybe the advice you wished you had gotten, couldn't have been relayed anyway. And even if it could have, would you have listened?

My father always told me that if I ate the crust on my toast (which I despised more than lima beans), it would put hair on my chest. Why, Dad, would I, an 8-year-old girl, want to put hair on my chest? I could never figure that one out.

Oh well, as it turned out, I acquired a taste for toast crust and never did develop chest hair. But don't ever tell your kid that one. They might not take it so well.



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