

Things Only Get Weirder From Here (For Both of Us)

Alix Black

Double Digits. Oh boy. You're ten years old and that means that you aren't a baby, you aren't a child, and you're not even my little boy anymore. You are - *cringe* - a pre-teen. And that means one thing: puberty is coming.

Yes, Mom just said that word. No, I don't like it either.

Things only get weirder from here, for both of us, I'm afraid. Here's a list of all the things that we used to think were weird and uncomfortable that will become our new normal. Like I said, this bodes true for both of us.

Yep, we have to talk about what you smell like because it's not good, bud. I know what your dad smells like, and, honestly, that is also not my favorite thing either. Use that deodorant I put on your desk with the cologne you got for Christmas every day. (Nope, I'm not kidding, every single day. Sometimes twice. Maybe more because you play sports, kiddo).

You think the hair on your elbow is annoying? Wait until it's growing in other places. I don't want to say where but judging by the way you just glanced down and asked me, "*Not everywhere, right?*" I have a feeling that we're going to have to talk about it just a little. Yes, it does grow EVERYWHERE on EVERYONE. Let's switch topics, yeah?

Please don't put your hands in your pants in front of other people. I don't

care the reason why you did it, please stop telling me, just don't do it. Yeah? Yeah. Good. Moving on.

If you hear a word and you think you know what it means, maybe ask your dad or me first? Because sometimes you use grown up words that you heard at school and you use them incorrectly (*or just use them, some of those things you shouldn't be saying AT ALL, just so you know*). I promise that we'll explain these things to you no matter how uncomfortable it is because we don't want you to use those words somewhere else and get in trouble or be embarrassed because you don't understand.

Let's not move our hips that way at people. You don't need to know why, okay? Just don't do it because you're way too young to know what that means – but some of your friends probably do already, and let's just avoid all of the awkward rumors and confrontations that will result from that continued movement. I promise this is for the best. No, I'm really not going to explain it right now, so drop it.

Dad already ruined the yucko surprise about where babies come from. Let's just leave it at that for now. You'll be getting that talk in about six months at school and they're way more qualified to give you the medical information than we are – if you have questions afterwards, then we'll sit down and have that chat as a family unit. Probably with some cake so we at least have something to distract us from how uncomfortable it is to be discussing all of that stuff.

I know everyone used to joke about having boyfriends or girlfriends when you were little – but that's not a joke anymore. You are not allowed to have boyfriends or girlfriends at this age now because of all of the new puberty stuff that'll be happening. We definitely would prefer if you waited to date people until you're fifteen, yeah? Dating has so many implications and, right now, we just need to get over the pre-teen hurdle. Yes, you – me – and dad. All three of us need to make it to thirteen first. We will revisit the topic then.

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Your emotions will make no sense. I mean, really, they have never made sense because children have weird emotional reactions to literally everything. But pre-teens and teenagers move through those emotions so quickly... We won't be able to keep up. We're trying. We know it's just as bad for you. I know you don't believe me

now, but remember when you cried because we asked you to stop chewing on your eraser? Lots more of that kind of stuff to come, my dude.

Everyone thinks that they are ugly, or fat, or gross during puberty – but it's not your job to decide that for other people or yourself. You are a great person just the way you are, even as your body starts changing from a child's body into a young adult's body. You are wonderful, fantastic, beautiful, amazing! Your brain will try to make you think you're less than because sometimes that's just

how the brain works during puberty (What a gross word, blech), but you're not. Dad and I will always be here when you're feeling down about something – even if it's something none of us really want to talk about. We will listen because we love you.

Pre-teen years are going to be crazy, but not more than the upcoming teenager years – when you'll be spending the night with friends all weekend, going to dances and parties for school, learning to drive, and getting a job. You've done all of your growing up and now it's time for your maturing. The first adventure in our life is done.

Things only get weirder from here, for both of us, but someday – you'll be glad for this list. I hope that being able to talk about the weird, gross, and awkward things will keep our relationship as mother, father, and son strong. We are always on your side.

No matter what that side smells like...



Alix Black is one half of the whole person that is Alicia Haynes! By day, Alicia is a Mental Health Professional that teaches people of all ages how to be successful with mental, emotional, and behavioral challenges in their lives. Alicia is also the Content Coordinator for her local magazine that features family success stories. But by night, Alixx writes stories about anything and everything - whether it's poetry with a purpose, fanfiction for fun, for a personal narrative to connect with others, there's always something worth writing in her eyes. To enjoy more of Alixx's work, please visit her blog at alixblack.wordpress.com.

