

Mean Moms

Someday when my children are old enough to understand the logic that motivates a parent, I will tell them, as my Mean Mom told me:

I loved you enough to ask where you were going, with whom, and what time you would be home. I loved you enough to be silent and let you discover that your new best friend was a creep. I loved you enough to stand over you for two hours while you cleaned your room, a job that should have taken 15 minutes. I loved you enough to let you see anger, disappointment, and tears in my eyes. Children must learn that their parents aren't perfect. I loved you enough to let you assume the responsibility for your actions even when the penalties were so harsh they almost broke my heart. But most of all, I loved you enough to say NO when I knew you would hate me for it.

Those were the most difficult battles of all. I'm glad I won them, because in the end you won, too. And someday when your children are old enough to understand the logic that motivates parents, you will tell them.

Was your Mom mean? I know mine was. We had the meanest mother in the whole world! While other kids ate candy for breakfast, we had to have cereal, eggs, and toast. When others had a Pepsi and a Twinkie for lunch, we had to eat sandwiches. And you can guess our mother fixed us a dinner that was different from what other kids had, too. Mother insisted on knowing where we were at all times. You'd think we were convicts in a prison. She had to know who our friends were and what we were doing with them. She insisted that if we said we would be gone for an hour, we would be gone for an hour or less.

We were ashamed to admit it, but she had the nerve to break the Child Labor Laws by making us work. We had to wash the dishes, make the beds, learn to cook, vacuum the floor, do laundry, empty the trash and all sorts of cruel jobs. I think she would lie awake at night thinking of more things for us to do. She always insisted on us telling the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. By the time we were teenagers, she could read our minds and had eyes in the back of her head. Then, life was really tough!

Mother wouldn't let our friends just honk the horn when they drove up. They had to come up to the door so she could meet them. While everyone else could date when they were 12 or 13, we had to wait until we were 16. Because of our mother we missed out on lots of things other kids experienced. None of us have ever been caught shoplifting, vandalizing other's property or ever arrested for any crime. It was all her fault.

Now that we have left home, we are all educated, honest adults. We are doing our best to be mean parents just like Mom was. I think that is what's wrong with the world today. It just doesn't have enough mean moms!