

The Inside Story on Teen Girls

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American Psychological Association/APA LifeTools (May 15, 2002)

Unknown \$12.95 (243pp)

978-1-55798-892-8

“If you had the chance to have a private and confidential conversation with an expert with a great deal of knowledge and understanding about the concerns of adolescent girls today, what would you ask them?” When a cross section of adolescent girls from the United States responded to this very question, along with a host of teachers, parents, and other professionals, more than 6,000 questions were brought before a qualified panel of psychological expertise.

As leading experts in the field of adolescence, parenting, and relationship issues, the authors draw upon their past participation in the American Psychological Association Task Force on Adolescent Girls and their private practices for the foundation of this remarkable compilation. Their combined interest in searching for answers to the questions most asked by parents and teens results in a treasure chest of practical advice. The authors note that “there is more than one perspective and therefore more than one answer for almost every question” because of existing diversity. The appropriate solution to any problem is in the hands of the reader, as specific criteria are taken into consideration.

The flip-styled layout moves the reader into action, seamlessly bridging the gap between generations. The first half of the book addresses the questions from the point of view of parents and teachers, who receive replies in the framework of understanding adolescent behavior. When the book is flipped over, the reader finds the same flawless attention given to the teen’s point of view. The adult learns to depersonalize conflict and examine the issues from a teen’s perspective. Cautionary advice follows each pivotal section. For instance, when a mother asks what factors initially lead a girl to premarital sex, the experts outline known factors, one of which is peer pressure. The parent knows she cannot rear her child in a clinical bubble free of these pressure points. However, her awareness of these factors as a reality in her daughter’s complex world will ultimately assist her in shoring up her daughter’s strength and confidence. The flip side describes the agonizing angst and problematic struggles of the adolescent teen.

The Inside Story on Teen Girls tears down the barriers between generations and opens the path for healthy communication. Rubenstein and Zager have given parents and teens, as well as educators, a strategic tool. In a time of increasing pressures and societal shortcomings, this book paves the way to stronger relationships and better understanding.

(July / August 2002)

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