

**W**hen Courtney Cox and her daughter Coco

recently spoke about their relationship they captured the challenges of most mothers and their teenage daughters.

'I want her to tell me everything, and she doesn't want to tell me anything,' the former *Friends* star said of her 13-year-old.

Coco went on to explain that while they were very close they did 'get in fights'.

While tension and outbursts seem to be par for the course in mother/teenage daughter relationships, a new book gives practical advice for navigating this time of your life.

Psychologist Dr Sarah Hughes wrote *Skip The Drama* (Exisle Publishing, \$29.99) after working with hundreds of teen girls and their families and finding they deal with similar issues. As she says: 'Parenting has always been a tough gig, but parenting a teenage daughter in today's world is a uniquely stressful experience, and one which leaves most parents – even the most resilient ones – feeling beaten, frazzled and confused.'

As someone who knows exactly what's she's talking about, I found plenty of advice about dealing with diets, sex, social media and mood changes.

Sarah explains that teen girls are inherently selfish because the pre-frontal cortex of their brain has yet to fully develop



**WITH MUM-OF-TWO AND SOCIAL COMMENTATOR ANGELA MOLLARD**



# Dialling down the DAUGHTER DRAMA

and they have yet to deeply understand others' perspectives.

But you can improve their thoughtfulness by encouraging self-reflection. As Sarah says, you need to use a neutral rather than judgemental tone when pointing out how your daughter's behaviour affects others.

It's also important not to agree to her every request. Sarah suggests if your teen wants you to drive her somewhere, you need to make your 'yes'

conditional on her helping you with chores around the house.

But it's not only your daughter who needs to change. Sarah says mothers also need to adapt and appreciate their teenage daughters are growing up. Teenagers have their own set of opinions and want to be part of the decision-making process.

'You want her to listen and respect the boundaries you set, but she needs to feel like you're willing to listen to what she

thinks and feels before she's able to do this.'

Sarah advises parents lead by example by being collaborative and willing to compromise.

And how's this for a great piece of advice: 'Ask open-ended questions, listen to understand, and steer clear of long-winded lectures. You have two ears and one mouth – when it comes to conversations with your teen, be guided by that ratio.'



**'SHE MAKES FUN OF ME. WHEN I FACETIME HER SHE'S LIKE 'OH MY GOD, IT'S AMY ADAMS!' SHE'S SIX BY THE WAY.'**

Amy Adams, actress and mother-of-one.

## SIBLING STRENGTH

Strong sibling bonds can offset the negative effects of fighting parents, with children using their siblings as a source of protection and emotional support, according to new research. While kids who experienced recurrent conflict were at a higher risk of developing mental health problems, a strong relationship with a brother or sister reduced vulnerability.



## FREEZE FACTS



Women are not freezing their eggs so as to focus on their careers but because they can't find men who will commit to a relationship, according to new research. A Yale University study found that lack of a stable partnership was the main reason for delaying motherhood, and that women froze their eggs in the hope of finding a partner later or in case they wanted to become a single mother with donor sperm.

SUNDAYS SHOULD COME WITH A PAUSE BUTTON

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