

Helping A Friend: Son's 12 Year Old Son Comes Across Pictures

Client's Question:

This is a bit awkward, because I am NOT the parent in need. Fact is I am not a parent or married or even dating anyone. And frankly not sure why she will not seek out counseling for her own sake, except to chat with a stranger (me) online about a topic that is of delicate and frank content.

Background from what I have been told is she is divorced. Her X husband while with her had taken some nude pictures of her in various poses. Now he is gone and her 12 year old son came across these pictures (She's raising him alone).

He saw her naked and started to ask her things about her. Specifically about her southern region. And if that was not difficult enough for me to comment on (because she was asking me) she then tells me that she had exposed herself to her son in a manner that no mother should in an efforts to try and help him understand what woman are about.

So if this situation is in fact true, how does one advise her to proceed? Because now the son not only is more interested in the woman body...but his mothers specifically.

Chastising her is of no help, since the deed is done. She knows it was wrong and will not do it again. (So she says)

Had he just seen some nude photos I think its obvious you tell the kid its not appropriate for someone of his age to be looking at those things and when he gets older he will understand.

But she crossed a boundary that I do not think society is comfortable with. And now she is trying to figure out how to fix the situation so he is not curious about her.

My only suggestion I could come up with (other then seek a pastor or counselor) was to tell her to try and get him interested in other gals.

IE: have girls of his own age over to their house or bring him around more girls so he gets fixated with them instead of her.

Girly magazines maybe.

I am going to send her your web link in hopes she comes to you with this problem, but in case she does not, what can you offer me as advice on advising her how to handle this situation?

Surely suggesting the son get fixated on other girls is not way out on a limb, but there has to be other ideas. I told her to tell him no more one on one moments with mom is appropriate.

And that it was probably a good idea if she could find him male role models to talk to about this sort of thing.

ScottCounseling Response:

Your last sentence most likely sums up what may be one appropriate solution. Most 12 year olds are naturally becoming curious about the difference between male and female parts. Too many children today learn about the “bird and the bees” in the last three rows of the school bus. Many schools begin to teach the basics of male and female anatomy in 4th-5th grade classes. In most cases, sex ed. is begun before puberty kicks in for boys.

Mom needs to make a phone call to her son’s school to see what is being taught in this area. If nothing is being taught in school, mom may utilize non-graphic sexual education books (found in most libraries and online) that have pictures of male and female body.

Mom may also want to consider teaming with a male mentor for her son who (after developing an appropriate rapport) can have “man to man” talks. Are you that person?

Yes! Give mom my Website: ScottCounseling.com- and have her click on “Ask A Counselor.” I will be happy to provide her with other tips to help her son and her become comfortable and successful during this stage of development in their lives.

Thanks for being a helpful individual...and, thanks for contacting me.