

a
parents
guide to

teenage
dating

#revolutionworship

Text for that 11-14 age range, hadn't called it dating yet. But expectations were the same.

I've enjoyed meeting you and your family over the past weeks. (Daughter) let me know that you guys are beginning to get more serious so I wanted to make my expectations clear.

I like what I have seen from you so far. You are respectful of those around you and you stand by your word. I appreciate those characteristics and as such am okay with you and (Daughter) being more intentional in spending time together.

(Daughter) is one of the most important things in this world to me and I protect her heart fiercely. She is a compassionate kid who seeks to help other over her own best interest sometimes. I expect you to protect her when she is around you as well. Not so much physically, she can handle herself well, but emotionally! Respect her even when around "the guys." I was a high school guy once too and know what goes through our minds. She has clear boundaries about physical things in a relationship and I expect you to honor those. And don't betray her trust. We have been down that road with boys and my girls before and once that trust is lost, it's very difficult to restore. My best advice is to never compromise it to begin with!

If you can follow those expectations and continue being the gentleman you have shown yourself to be so far, then I'm fine with you guys being more serious.

Don't hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns. I appreciate your upfront respect so far and it was a welcome change from many boys I see in ministry. Thank you for that, it's encouraging to see!

Boyfriend in the late 11-14 age range

I've waited for a little while to send you this text as I've been able to see you interact with (Daughter) with my own eyes. I also have the benefit of you being in her life as a good friend for a year prior to anything starting with you guys as well. I asked (Daughter) for your number last week so I could share some of my thoughts/expectations in regard to (Daughter).

You have shown yourself as a very respectful guy and I appreciate that, I encourage you to keep that in regard to my daughter as well. I expect you to defend (Daughter) and honor her with your thoughts and actions. (Daughter) is one of the most important things in this world to me and I will protect her fiercely. Honesty, trust, and communication are big parts of any relationship. You mess up with any of those three and things will get difficult. You two have done a great job communicating so far and I'm thankful for the honesty in your relationship.

Both of my girls have clear boundaries in their lives when it comes to the emotional and physical aspects of a relationship. I ask that you respect those boundaries with (Daughter), so far you haven't given me any reason to doubt you will do exactly that. I just want it to be crystal clear between us. You are kind to the rest of my family and we enjoy you being around. Thank you for making (Daughter) a priority in your life, we have seen her do the same with you. If you ever need to talk or need clarification on my expectations then don't hesitate to reach out to me. I want you to both be happy and will do all I can to help with that. We have enjoyed getting to know you and your family and look forward to lots of great memories still to come. Thanks man.

Boyfriend in the early 16-17 age range

I normally send a text to the guys that my girls are interested in to explain my expectations. Since you have been around for a while before you were official, I've been able to hear and see how you treat (Daughter). Especially over the last couple of weeks I've had a lot of time on the road and in life to see you two together. I am happy with what I've seen and you do a good job making (Daughter) happy and helping her grow into the person she wants to be. Thank you for that. You have been quickly adopted into our family. Even Bali (our dog) likes you which says a lot, even though she can be a jerk from time to time.

Both of my girls have clear boundaries for their hearts and bodies and I fully expect you to honor both. I know how guys think, I'm not that old, and want you to treat my daughter with the utmost respect at all times. I protect my daughters with a ferocity that most people have never seen. (Daughter) is one of my most precious possessions in this life and I will let no person or thing hurt her. You have done a great job with her so far, as long as that continues I don't see any reason for you to see another side of me. I much prefer interacting with my more chill side.

You are obviously special to (Daughter) as she has never introduced another guy to our family like she has you, and she has never fought so hard to not have you in her life only to realize she needed you there all along. I can't tell the future, so I don't know what next year or the next season holds for you guys, but I am thankful for your presence in her life. I know this will be an awkward text, but I wanted to make my expectations crystal clear so there will never be any confusion between you and me. Treat my daughter right and we will be good. Treat her with any lower value than I give her, and we won't be good. She is precious to me and I expect you to treat her accordingly. Glad you are in our lives, you are an encouragement to us all.

Text for that 15-17 age range where driving is in the picture. This was before a potential first date.

Hey man, (Daughter) mentioned you guys might grab coffee tomorrow. I wanted to touch base super quick and let you know I'm on Old-School kind of Dad! I'm not sure what the relationship is, that is for you and (Daughter) to talk about sometime. As for my side. I have high expectations for anyone who spends time around my daughter.

I am still figuring out how we feel about the whole driving her thing, we are working on answer for both of you. Tomorrow we will drop her off, what are you guys planning so we will know what to expect and we can figure out how much time you guys will have.

I also expect you to act like a gentleman around my daughter and make sure she is safe at all times. I know it's just coffee and hangin out, but I expect her to be treated with the utmost care and respect. If my expectations are not met, you will be made aware and the opportunities to spend time with my daughter going forward could be impacted. All this is part of the "Old-School" approach man and I don't apologize for having standards when it comes to my daughters.

If this is all okay and understood then I'm fine with you guys grabbing some coffee tomorrow. If any of this gives you pause, then we can talk more but that will have to happen before you go anywhere with my daughter.

This was a text sent between me and my daughter. It was a less awkward way to talk about tough things. Open communication is crucial.

(Daughter), I wanted to share some thoughts about (Boy). I'm not telling you what to do, I want to just share past experience with you. A jealous person is incredibly difficult to be in a relationship with. It seems like (Boy's) insecurities come to land on you in the form of jealousy. It affects you, your friends, and other relationships too. Please be mindful of that jealousy as it can get out of hand quickly.

I also have issues with him being on your phone and checking your text history. Frankly it's your phone and none of his business. If he doesn't trust you then maybe he doesn't need to be with you. Your mom and I have been married for 17 years and I have NEVER checked her phone to see what she was texting and or who she was texting. That is called trust and is the sign of a healthy relationship.

Also be careful of the power of touch. A hand on a leg might not mean much to you, but guys are wired for physical over emotional connection. It can lead the mind to areas you don't need to go until God has shown you "the one" and you have made it all official. I noticed a neediness with (Boy) to be right on top of you when you were around your friends tonight and that goes back to the insecurity stuff, but that need to touch isn't a good way to cope with insecurity. It just looks needy.

Would be happy to elaborate on any of this with you face to face. Just want you to be careful and I'm seeing some behaviors that give me pause as a father and someone who loves you more than you know!!