

THE HIT ABC FAMILY ORIGINAL SERIES RETURNS

THE SECRET LIFE OF THE AMERICAN TEENAGER

"A New Kind of Green"

mondays at 8/7c

For Teens:

Here's some stuff to talk about from this week's episode:

- * When Ricky comments that Adrian looks comfortable holding John, she says she wants to have a baby at some point too – but not now. She explains she wants to finish high school and college first, and start a career and get married and then have a baby. That's her plan. Do you have a plan? What kinds of things do you think are important to have in place before having a baby?

fact: *Having a baby as a teenager makes it a lot harder to achieve your goals – whether those goals are educational, personal, or professional.*

- * Even though Adrian has a plan – to finish school, get a job, and be married before having children – she admits that sometimes she thinks about getting pregnant in order to compete with Amy. Then of course she snaps out of it, because she knows that's not the right thing to do... but she does think about it from time to time. Do you know anyone who ever thinks about getting pregnant on purpose? What would you say to a friend who thought she might want to get pregnant as a teenager?

fact: *Being a teenager is a great time for many things – but not pregnancy or parenthood. Waiting to have children until your education is complete, until you're financially stable, and until you are in a truly committed relationship is better for everyone involved. Especially the baby.*

- * Amy thinks Ben is being "grown up and reasonable" because he is trying to find activities – like cribbage – that he and Amy can do together and both enjoy. Why is that so weird? Isn't that what people who like each other do all the time? Why would Amy think he was acting more like a parent than a boyfriend? Can't boyfriends and girlfriends do things together that don't involve sex?

tip: *Doing simple things together that both people enjoy is a great way to improve a relationship.*

- * Amy doesn't want her father moving back in, even though her mom is having his baby. She points out that Ricky doesn't live with her, even though he is John's dad, and she acts like it's no big deal for a child to grow up apart from a

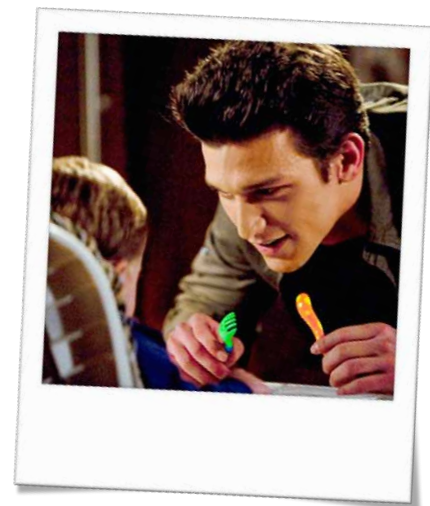


father or for a mother to have to handle the majority of the work. Do you think it's a big deal? What sorts of challenges do kids face when they grow up apart from their dads? What sorts of challenges do single moms face?

fact: *Babies born to teen moms are much more likely to grow up apart from their dads, and 8 out of 10 dads don't marry the teen mothers of their children.*

For Parents:

Watching a show like "The Secret Life of the American Teenager" with your teens is good way to start a conversation about sex, love, and relationships. Even though teens say that parents most influence their decisions about sex, parents of teens underestimate their own influence in this area. Here are some ideas for talking to your kids after watching the show.



- * Adrian's mom has some good insight into the situation with Adrian and Ricky when she suggests that they both cheat because they're afraid to be loved and afraid to get hurt. That's a pretty impressive interpretation of their relationship by Cindy, especially since she's so rarely present to observe the way they are together. Do you have a clear understanding of your kids' relationships? Do you talk to them about the situations they're in? Do you have an opportunity to see how they behave in social situations

tip: *Using television shows and other fictional storylines as a way to start conversations about relationships is a good idea. That way, you can talk about people and their actions without hurting a real person's feelings or forcing someone to feel defensive about how they behave.*



- * When Adrian lays out her desired plan for the future – that she wants to have a baby someday, but not until she completes school, has a career, and is married – Ricky encourages her to stick with it. That sequence of life events is a good one, and one that should be supported, not just by friends or boyfriends but by family as well. Have you ever talked to your kids about future milestones like marriage and babies? Do they know how you feel about the order of these important events?

fact: *Kids need to know what is acceptable in their families – that finishing high school or college before having babies is what is expected of them, or that having children outside of marriage is not. You may think your kids know how you feel about this, but if you haven't talked about it with them, how can you be sure?*