

Practical Tips for Staying Your Teenage Daughter's First Hero

You were the first man to:

- hold her hand and win her heart
- give her a kiss and snuggle her close
- read a bedtime story and tuck her in bed
- wipe her tears and calm her fears
- save the day and scare the boogey man away
- teach her to ride a bike and throw a ball
- lead by example, working hard to provide
- treat her like a lady, giving respect
- love her for being uniquely her
- treasure her, the apple of your eye

All of these things are solid and good, necessary and wonderful, essential and positive.

But it can't stop there—especially as she matures. Here are a few ways to grow right along with her:

Are you now the first man to:

- say you're sorry when you've hurt her heart?
- admit fault when you've been harsh?
- humble yourself, asking her to forgive you?

- soften your tone before she softens hers?
- listen to her when she's had a hard day?
- have her back when she needs support?
- believe in her when her friends betray?
- embrace her after a guy breaks her heart?
- hug her and hold her and dry her tears?
- go the extra mile when she has a need?
- extend grace like has been done to you?
- pursue time with her and engage her heart?

Dad, you were her first love, and that will always be true.

And now you have an opportunity to keep the first love theme going by being the first to model kindness, forgiveness, grace and compassion. Let her know by word and deed that she can always run to you because you'll always be there.

Why not choose one thing off this list of firsts so you can more proactively put your heart of love for your daughter into action today?

Why not be the first to initiate and lead while making that change to enhance your relationship with your daughter?

Better yet, why not be the first to write to tell me about it at drmichellewatson@? I always love hearing from you.

Who's going to be first? {eo}

Dr. Michelle Watson has a clinical counseling practice in Portland, Oregon and has served in that role for the past 17 years. She is founder of The Abba Project, a nine-month group forum that is designed to equip dads with daughters ages 13 to

30 to help them focus more intentionally on consistently pursuing their daughters' hearts. She released her first book titled, *Dad, Here's What I Really Need from You: A Guide for Connecting with Your Daughter's Heart*. She invites you to visit for more information and to sign up for her weekly *Dad-Daughter Friday* blogs where she provides practical tools so that every dad in America can become the action hero he wants to be and his daughter needs him to be. You can also follow or send feedback on Facebook and Twitter.