



*“Just watch a group of Gen Y’s gather and you will see more hugs than at a hairdresser’s convention, more high 5s than at a basketball game and more strange handshakes than at a secret’s society meeting. This group really know how to build relationships and stay connected to each other. The ubiquitous mobile phone means that their friends are only a text message away and they can bypass parents who as keepers of the home phone would once have kept an ear on who was contacting their children.”*

but opportunities are limited for this group. But if they hang in there the opportunities will increase as the baby-boomers retire and job opportunities increase.

The opposite was true for their parents who grew up in a time of endless opportunity but far fewer options.

**United** we stand. Many aspects of life for young people are transient and change quickly but their steadfast loyalty to each other doesn’t change. Just watch a group of Gen Y’s gather and you will see more hugs than at a hairdresser’s convention, more high 5s than at a basketball game and more strange handshakes than at a secret’s society meeting. This group really know how to build relationships and stay connected to each other. The ubiquitous mobile phone means that their friends are only a text message away and they can bypass parents who as keepers of the home phone would once have kept an ear on who was contacting their children. The tribal nature of their relationships can be disconcerting for babyboomer parents for whom friendships are important but career and family comes first.

By and large, babyboomer parents enjoy having Generation Y’s around. They have enough in common to remind them of their youth. And babyboomers do not want to grow old. Generation Xers (those born between 1961 and 1976), on the other hand, are unsure about Gen Y’s. As a cohort Gen X’ers are conservative so the prospect of raising teenagers tends to scare many of



them. Though closer in age they tend to have less in common with Gen Y’s than babyboomers and so can find raising and teaching them a challenge. Gen X’s experienced broken homes, uncertain parenting and highly experimental education methodology. They tend to expect a lot of schools, even deferring some of their parenting to others, and are fearful of experiencing poor relationships with their teenage children.

It is interesting to sit back and observe how the different generations raise, work and live with each other. It seems that you need to skip a generation to find one where you have something tangible in common even if it is just having a common enemy. In many ways Generation Y’s get on better with their grandparents who are mainly from the silent generation. Some commentators even suggest that Gen Y’s will follow their grandparents and the pendulum will swing back towards a commitment to marriage and having kids at an earlier age.

## Flying Solo & Staying Sane



SOLE PARENTING

Article by  
**Victoria Mills**  
Life Coach and writer,  
and sole parent

As a sole parent the relationship with your children can be very intense. Giving children space to grow away and stand on their own two feet is an issue many sole parents face.

With no one to discuss every day issues with or provide a break it is easy to lose perspective or place too much pressure on children.

Here are three ideas for sole parents when relationships with children become strained or you find yourself losing a sense of perspective:

**1. Do a self-check:** Ask yourself when you are on the verge of losing control:

- “How am I feeling about this issue?”
- “Am I projecting myself on my child?”
- “Are you looking after your needs?”

Sometimes we spend all our time looking at others when the problem can lay within. A little introspection can help when your relationships become intense.

**2. Give your children time away with other adults.** Exposing children to different adults who can offer new experiences and viewpoints is more than just time out. It is an enriching experience for children as they can give them freedom and creative outlets that often aren’t available to sole parents due to emotional proximity.

**3. Talk to another parent, friend or relative.** The value of gaining a sounding board cannot be overstated. It also helps if that person has children or is at least child-savvy so that they can offer you a different viewpoint or down-to-earth perspective.

Being a sole parent is a challenge but it is the small every day strategies that we use that can make all the difference for our sake and the sake of our children.