



GO-TO RESOURCES

FOR TWEEN + TEEN GIRLS



LET'S NOT PANIC.



It's easy to feel anxious and panicked about the world our daughters currently live in. Every day we're faced with screaming headlines about teenage sex. Binge drinking. Eating disorders. Depression. Risky online choices. ARGH!

But let's not panic.

As someone who is regularly in schools talking to tween and teenage girls – the girls I get to meet are smart and funny and strong BUT that's not to say they don't need help navigating this new world we're in. (I cannot tell you how glad I am that smart phones didn't exist when I was 14). So that's why I created this list. Here in one handy place are some of the terrific websites, books, podcasts and docos I would recommend to anyone who has a tween or teen girl in their life.

The most important thing I can say to you is that there is no ONE conversation to have with your daughter about online choices (or friendships or sex or whatever for that matter). All of these topics are BIG and it's about having lots of conversations all the time. Start a running dialogue which includes items in the news, story lines in books or movies or TV shows and other issues that come up day to day. Keep talking. Everything is a “teachable moment”. Think back to what it was like being in high school. And what's really key – practice listening to your daughter.

This list is just a starting point. There are loads of other great books and sites out there. I'll keep adding to this list too and update it every six months.

Here's to raising strong, smart, fierce girls who refuse to play small...

Bec xx



SOCIAL MEDIA...



Here's the thing with social media (whatever platform you use Instagram, Facebook etc) is that you need it to work FOR you not against you. If the only people you're following are friends (or friends of friends of friends!) then you're mostly just looking from side to side. Make sure your feed is full of people who make you look OUTWARDS. Fill it with people who inspire you, who call forth your best, who remind you of your values or what you stand for or who simply make you laugh. This is about protecting your headspace— so think about curating your feed so that what is given priority are those people and organisations who make you smile rather than those who leave you feeling less than.

Kids Helpline

If your child has a phone, I want you to add this number to their contact list. Get them following Kids Helpline on Instagram. Bookmark it on their iPad or laptop and put it on your fridge. Kids Helpline is Australia's only free, private and confidential online and phone counselling service. When your child is in a situation over their head or they're feeling worried about something — you want them to reach out to Kids Helpline where trained counsellors can talk them through their problems.

Amy Poehler's Smart Girls

Who doesn't love Amy Poehler? Right? This is a great resource for female role models and women doing cool things around the world. Official blurb: "Founded by actor and writer Amy Poehler and producer Meredith Walker, the Smart Girls organisation is dedicated to helping young people cultivate their authentic selves."

A Mighty Girl

A Mighty Girl is the world's largest collection of books, toys, and movies for parents, teachers, and others dedicated to raising smart, confident, and courageous girls.

TeamGirls

In 2017 ReachOut, Netball Australia and Suncorp joined forces to start a movement to help tween and teen girls feel more confident in their abilities, their bodies and their ideas. The Team Girls movement is all about girls supporting girls and their website (go to the 'content hub') has lots of great advice for parents and girls on social media, setting goals and navigating friendships.

Beauty Redefined

A not-for-profit site dedicated to redefining the meaning and value of beauty in our lives.

The Body Image Movement

Celebrating body diversity and body positivity – a site created by Australia's Taryn Brumfitt. (AWESOME! And Australian!) While you're there also show them the Dove Evolution video. Yes, I know it's Dove. It's been around for a while but this video is still a great reminder to tween girls about AIR BRUSHING OF IMAGES!

Enlighten Education

Enlighten Education runs programs in schools to help girls decode the mixed messages they receive. Enlighten is all about girls developing their self-worth. AMAZING Australian organisation run by Dannielle Miller.

ReachOut

ReachOut is Australia's largest online mental health website for young people and it's AMAZING. It's full of tips, strategies, resources and advice. All free. All confidential. This is a great one to follow on social media since they post so many practical, useful articles.

Geena Davis Institute On Gender In Media

"If she can see it, she can be it." Great feminist site about the representation of women in media. This site will arm you with facts and stats. "The Institute is the only research-based organization working within the media and entertainment industry to engage, educate, and influence the need to dramatically improve, gender balance, reduce stereotyping and create diverse female characters in entertainment targeting children 11 and under."

Hey Sigmund: where the science of psychology meets the art of being human.

This is a GORGEOUS, USEFUL website for parents and non-parents alike. Psychologist Karen Young offers wisdom plus the latest research on everything from relationship break-ups to parenting young kids and teens. GREAT RESOURCE.

Orange Sky Laundry

This is what good men look like. Two Brisbane men (uni students and mates) created the first mobile laundry service providing homeless people with access to free washing/drying facilities. LOVE.

UN Women Australia

“Empower a woman, empower a nation. The Australian National Committee for UN Women is one of 18 National Committees worldwide. We are committed to gender equality and the empowerment of women. Join us in supporting women and girls worldwide by ending poverty, ending violence against women and creating a better future for all.”

Children’s Books Daily

This site run by award-winning Brisbane teacher-librarian Megan Daley is my go-to source for kids and YA recommendations. Megan KNOWS books like nobody else. If you or your tween/teen are looking for reading recommendations, Megan has them.

Words With Heart

An Australian company who produce eco-friendly notebooks and journals for girls and women. Fantastic covers! And part of the profits go towards educating girls around the world. The WWH

Facebook page is always full of interesting posts about women and feminism.

Penguin Teen

Penguin do a great FB page on what’s hot in YA books. Smiling Mind Teaching kids and adults about mindfulness and meditation. Their app is TERRIFIC.

GIVIT

A great not-for-profit site that encourages people to donate their unwanted, no longer needed items to specific people in genuine need. Givit Kids allows Australian kids to help other Aussie kids in need.

The Women’s Legal Service Queensland

Interesting articles and stats on domestic violence as well as how to spot it and how to get out.

RIZE UP

Providing practical assistance to Australian families affected by domestic violence.

Charity Spam

An Australian hub for all things socially kind. Get involved in your community.

Dr Kristy Goodwin

Helping parents, educators and health professionals find healthy and helpful ways to raise young children.

Tiddas 4 Tiddas

Social media savvy Kamilaroi women, Marlee and Keely have created a digital space to celebrate the achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

INSPIRING WOMEN – A FEW OF THE INTERESTING WOMEN I FOLLOW ON SOCIAL MEDIA



Ashley Graham

Model, designer, author and body image activist. Ashley is one of the most successful super models. She also happens to be plus-size (what does that even mean in 2020? Nearly all of us are plus size!).

Ash Barty

Ash (or Smash as she has been dubbed) Barty is an Australian-indigenous tennis player who won the French Open in 2019. But more than her impressive

tennis skills, Ash has won the hearts of Aussies everywhere for her grace, attitude and resilience. Most interesting of all is that Ash walked away from tennis at the age of 18 when it was no longer bringing her great joy. She returned a few years later and is now setting the tennis world on fire (again). The lesson? It’s okay to walk away from something when you’ve fallen out of love with it. You can always come back.

Brene Brown

Brene is a research professor at The University of Houston studying vulnerability, courage, shame, and authenticity. www.brenebrown.com

Laura Jones

Laura's an artist and her LauraJaneIllustrations Insta account is a delight to follow. She delights in bringing her followers daily pops of positivity!

Carly Findlay

Award-winning blogger, writer and appearance activist.

Celeste Barber

This Australian comedian's hilarious Instagram account pokes fun at the ridiculousness of many celebrity social media posts. LOVE.

Chrissie Swan

Hilarious, brilliant TV and radio host. Mum to three small people. I love her.

Dawn Tan

Brilliant Singaporean-Australian artist from Melbourne who specialises in quirky food and nature paintings!

Dannielle Miller

Danni is the CEO of Enlighten Education which is Australia's leading provider of workshops for girls on self-esteem, body image and empowerment. Danni's social media feed is always full of interesting and insightful ideas and commentary about women, girls and feminism.

Elizabeth Gilbert

The official FB page of author Elizabeth Gilbert is hilarious, feisty and kind. She does swear a lot so keep that in mind if your daughter is younger and/or you are easily offended.

Emma Watson

Actress (beloved for her portrayal of Hermione in the Harry Potter films) she is a feminist, UN Global Goodwill Ambassador and actor.

Melissa Leong

TV host, food lover, food and travel writer, cook book editor ... As a Masterchef judge we learned that Mel is intelligent, articulate, compassionate and a woman

who champions positivity. She's also very open about living life with depression and anxiety. LOVE HER.

Gloria Steinem

Feminist icon, writer, activist.

Gretchen Rubin

The New York Times best-selling author is a happiness expert. Gretchen posts lots of links and interesting research on habits and happiness.

Abby Wambach

Soccer legend, speaker, activist and author of Wolf Pack: how to come together, unleash our power and change the game. Great role model!

Jamila Rizvi

Writer, presenter, political junkie. I fully suspect Jam is going to end up as our next female Prime Minister. Just watch...

Jean Kilbourne

Jean Kilbourne is internationally recognised for her ground-breaking work on the image of women in advertising. She is most famous for her documentary **KILLING US SOFTLY**.

Maya Angelou

Facebook page of the late, great author, poet and feminist.

Karni Liddell

Former Paralympian, Karni is a journalist, diversity educator and disability specialist.

Laura Geitz

Former Captain of the Queensland Firebirds and the Australian Diamonds. Netball, baby!

Leila Gurruwiwi

Indigenous TV presenter and sports commentator!

Malala Fund

Inspired by teenage activist Malala Yousafzai, this page is focused on allowing girls to go to school and raising their voices for their right to an education.

Melinda Gates

Co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, businesswoman, and mother. Dedicated to helping all people lead healthy, productive lives.

Mia Freedman

Creative genius, feminist, entrepreneur, empire-builder, tea-lover and the co-founder of the Mamamia Women's Network. BOOM. Mia's podcast **No Filter** is where she has extraordinary conversations with some of the most fascinating women (and men) in the country.

Michelle Obama

Because, you know, it's MICHELLE OBAMA.

Mindy Karling

Mindy is an American actress, comedian and writer best known for her TV series The Mindy Project (which she created and starred in) and her role on the US version of The Office. She's a strong, smart role model for girls. Love her.

Natasha Stott Despoja

Natasha is Australia's Ambassador for Women and Girls. She is a former politician and former leader of the Australian Democrats. Natasha's Twitter feed is always informative and inspiring.

Dr Susan Carland

Muslim sociologist Dr Susan Carland is the author of 'Fighting Hislam: Women, Faith and Sexism'.

Yoga With Adriene

Adriene Mishler is an actress, writer and international yoga teacher from Texas. In her baggy t-shirts and leggings and with her dog Benji by her side, there's a reason why Adriene has more than 7 million people following yoga YouTube channel. Forget crop tops and 6-pack abs — Adriene is all about feeling good about yourself and your body.

Taryn Brumfitt

Taryn is a writer, speaker and founder of the Body Image Movement. She's a force of nature and most famous for her globally successful documentary EMBRACE which investigates why so many women loathe their own bodies. Taryn is an internationally recognised positive body image activist!

Turia Pitt

Um, it's TURIA PITT. She's fierce.

OTHER GREAT NAMES FOR TEENAGE GIRLS TO HAVE ON THEIR RADAR:

Journalists Sarah Ferguson, Julia Baird, Annabel Crabb, Leigh Sales and Kate McClymont. Dr Fiona Wood, indigenous author Dr Anita Heiss, Captain Catherine McGregor, indigenous author Tara June Winch, the late disability activist Stella Young, Olympian Anna Meares, cook Poh Ling Yeow, entrepreneur Therese Rein and Australia's first indigenous woman elected into the Lower House Linda Burney MP.

BOOKS - NON-FICTION FOR YOU + YOUR DAUGHTER TO READ



The Confidence Code For Girls – taking risks, messing up & becoming your amazingly imperfect, totally powerful self by Katty Kay & Claire Shipman.

Goodnight Stories for Rebel Girls – 100 tales of extraordinary women This book is FANTASTIC. Makes a terrific birthday present for a tween or teen girl. Volume 2 was published in 2017 - **Goodnight Stories for Rebel Girls 2**

Amazing Babes by Eliza Sarlos.

This book is BRILLIANT — gorgeous hardcover brimming with female role models. Makes a great present!

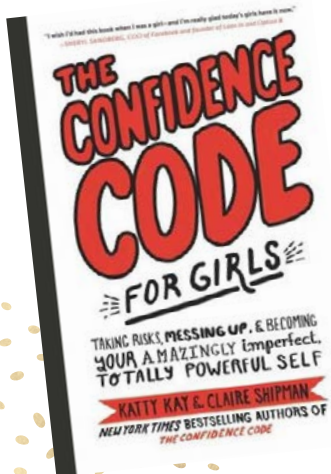
Girls Think Of Everything: stories of ingenious inventions by women by Catherine Thimmesh and Illustrated by Melissa Sweet

How To Be A Woman by Caitlin Moran.

My favourite book on feminism by comedy writer Caitlin Moran she covers everything from brazilians to strip clubs to abortion to workplace sexism.

Girl Stuff by Kaz Cooke.

This is the bible on everything relating to teenage girls — great resource to have. Note: there is also a new edition for girls aged 8-12.



Good Selfie by Turia Pitt.

I cannot recommend this ebook highly enough. Turia answers the questions she is most often asked by teens – most of which have to do with her resilience. The book is practical and full of clever strategies and ideas of how teens can get through tough times in their lives. LOVE IT. It's an easy to read format – perfect for kids aged 10 and up.



Speaking Out by Tara Moss.

I haven't read this yet, but it comes highly recommended and is suitable for senior high school students.

Half the Sky: turning oppression into opportunity by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn.

I am Malala by Malala Yousafzai.

Embrace by Taryn Brumfitt.

The Girl With The Butterfly Tattoo by Danielle Miller

Lovability: an empowered girl's guide to dating and

relationships by Dannielle Miller and Nina Funnell.

Great book!

The Gift of Fear (and other survival signals that protect us from violence) by Gavin De Becker.

Ugly by Robert Hoge.

How To Be Happy (a memoir of love, sex and teenage confusion) by David Burton.

If you are Christian and want something reflecting those values then go for books by **Sharon Witt.**

Welcome to Your Period by Yumi Styne and Dr Melissa Kang.

ROC and Rise by Claire Eaton

This book by Claire Eaton is a must-have for every teenage boy and girl. Claire offers up practical, strategies to help teenagers become resilient, optimistic and confident.

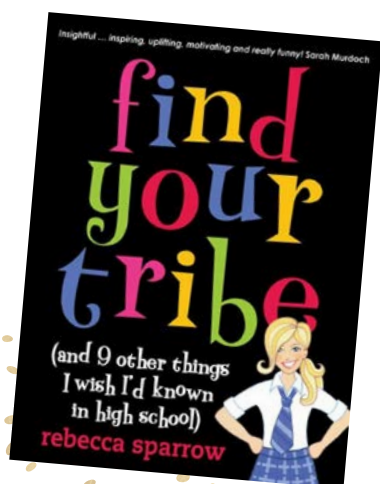
Every Day Resilience Journal by Michelle Mitchell

— primary school kids love Michelle's journal which walks them through typical school day situations and teaches them how to handle some of those trickier moments.

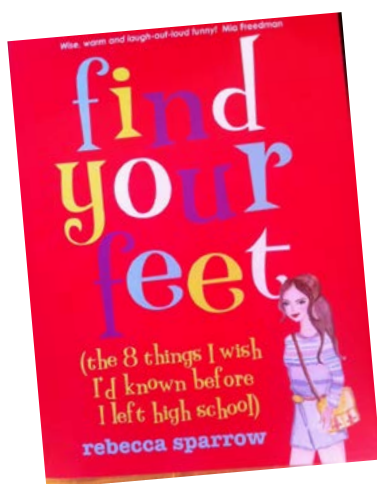
MY NON-FICTION BOOKS FOR TEENAGE GIRLS



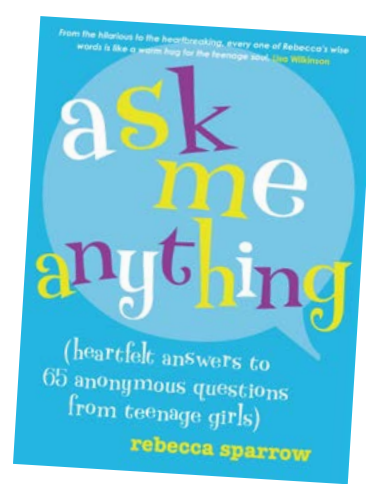
Find Your Tribe (and 9 other things I wish I'd known in high school) by Rebecca Sparrow



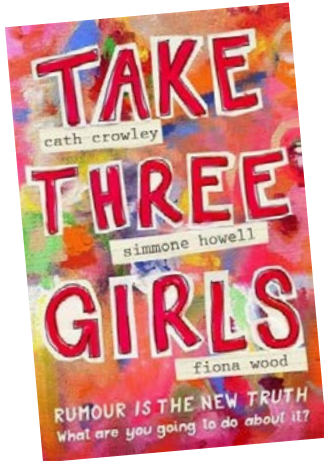
Find Your Feet (the 8 things I wish I'd known before I left high school) by Rebecca Sparrow



Ask Me Anything (heartfelt answers to 65 anonymous questions from teenage girls) by Rebecca Sparrow



BOOKS - FICTION FOR YOU + YOUR DAUGHTER TO READ



Take Three Girls by Fiona Wood, Cath Crowley and Simone Howell.

This is a page-turner of the book which deftly handles themes of friendship, identity, bullying and feminism. Girls in grade 9 and over will relate to the storyline of an anonymous rumour-based website targeting (and shaming) local high school girls.

Saving Jazz by Kate McCaffrey

This is a YA novel which is incredibly powerful about online behaviour, consent and the ramifications of sharing naked images without someone's consent. It's blunt and realistic –

expect f-bombs but it will speak to many teens. Great to see a novel dealing with the issue of sharing naked images from the point of view of three perpetrators (two male and one female).

I also love **Eleanor and Park by Rainbow Rowell.**

The Surprising Power of a Good Dumpling by Wai Chim

It Sounded Better In My Head by Nina Kenwood

For tween readers I love:

Wonder by R J Palacio

Raymie Nightingale by Kate DiCamillo

Polly and Buster by Sally Rippin

Kensy and Max by Jacqueline Harvey

Mosquito Advertising series by Kate Hunter.

BOOKS - NON-FICTION FOR PARENTS



Girls and Sex: navigating the complicated new landscape by Peggy Orenstein.

This is BRILLIANT.

Cinderella Ate My Daughter by Peggy Orenstein.

WolfPack by Abby Wambach.

Queen Bees and Wannabes (helping your daughter survive cliques, gossip, boyfriends and other realities of adolescence) by Rosalind Wiseman.

The Butterfly Effect: raising happy, confident teen girls by Dannielle Miller.

Rising Strong by Brené Brown.

Being 14: helping fierce teens become awesome women by Madonna King.

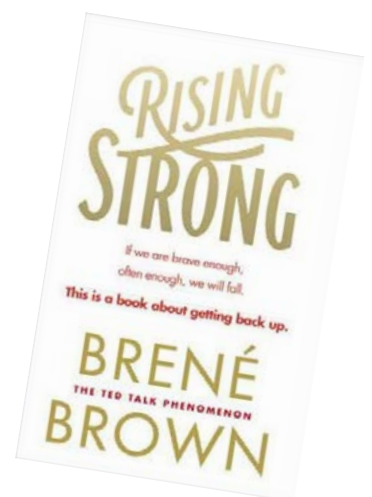
Fathers and Daughters: helping girls and their dads build unbreakable bonds by Madonna King.

Option B: Facing adversity, building resilience and finding joy by Sheryl Sandberg and Adam Grant.

This is a must-have book for every household, in my opinion.

Miss-Connection: why your teenage daughter 'hates' you, expects the world and needs to talk by Dr Justin Coulson.

Starting Secondary School by Michael Carr-Gregg and Sharon Witt.



DOCUMENTARIES



Big Bad Love

With young women 18-24 being most at risk of abuse, Australian comedian Becky Lucas sets out to understand what an abusive relationship looks like, how it begins and why it's so hard to intervene. (LINK notes: option to rent or buy via Vimeo).

Killing Us Softly 4

Advertising's image of women: this doco is

based on Jean Kilbourne's lecture on gender

stereotypes and the image of women in advertising.

Miss Representation

This 2010 doco explores how mainstream media contribute to the under-representation of women in influential positions by circulating limited and often disparaging portrayals of women.

Embrace by Taryn Brumfitt

This is a must-watch for all tweens and teens.

He Named Me Malala

the story of Malala Yousafzai.

Bully

VIDEOS



PINK'S VMA SPEECH on body image

"We will not change."

We Should All Be Feminists

TEDx Talk by Nigerian novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. This Ted Talk is brilliant and discusses the importance of feminism. It's so powerful that Beyonce sampled part of this speech in the opening of her song Flawless.

Consent is like a cup of tea

A video designed to help young women understand the concept of consent. IMPORTANT!

Texting While Driving

Some young drivers talk about their texting and driving habits and then are faced with a woman who lost her family to texting driver.

Kitty Flanagan talks about porn on The Weekly

Great video for students to watch where Kitty discusses how porn has normalised anal sex despite most women not enjoying it.

VIDEO FOR PARENTS - Rosalind Wiseman (author of Queen Bees and Wannabes). **This is a talk she gives on parenting teenagers.**

INTERESTING ARTICLES + COLUMNS



The X-Plan: give your kids a way out

Children need close pals not popularity

Emma Watson will no longer take selfies with fans for this important reason

Charm Offensive: A surprising red flag for domestic violence (Sydney Morning Herald, 2016)

Anxiety in Kids: How to turn it around and protect them for life

Four Things To Remember During Schoolies Week by Rebecca Sparrow

This one phrase will stop gossip immediately

To The Men I Love About The Men Who Scare Me

Have smart phones destroyed a generation?

The Day Iceland's Women Went on Strike

PODCASTS



Rebel Girls podcast

The podcast from the best-selling books! A must-listen!

Fierce Girls podcast by ABC Radio

My daughter LOVES this podcast. Women like Leigh Sales, Turia Pitt, Lisa Wilkinson and Laura Geitz read inspirational stories of Cathy Freeman, Jessica Watson and more.

#TeamGirls

In 10 This is a podcast I host which is perfect for teen girls to listen to in the car! Each episode is only 10 minutes long and joined by a different expert each week we cover Body Image, Sleep, Friendships, Sport Participation, Social Media and the role dads, uncles and other men can play in the life of teenage

girls. #TeamGirls in 10 is powered by Suncorp.

Ask Me Anything podcast

Another podcast hosted by me where I answer anonymous question from tween and teen girls!

No Filter by Mia Freedman

Will introduce you to some of Australia's most fascinating people. Past interviewees include Lisa Wilkinson, Captain Catherine McGregor, Ita Buttrose, Sarah Ferguson and Gloria Steinem.

HCF's Navigating Parenthood Podcast: Talking To Teens

Join host Rebecca Sparrow as she she talks to six teenagers who open up and tell her the truth about dating, sex, parties, depression, anxiety, body image and grief. It's a must-listen for every parent.

MAGAZINES



There are some terrific magazines for tween and teen girls and a subscription makes a wonderful birthday or Christmas present. My favourites include **Teen Breathe**, **Kookie**, **Aquila** and **National Geographic for Kids**.

POETRY

Phenomenal Woman by Maya Angelou

The Storms Will Come by Tyler Knott

Still I Rise by Maya Angelou

The Journey by Mary Oliver

Invictus by William Ernest Henley

RESOURCES FOR YOUR TEEN WHEN THEY NEED HELP

Headspace: National youth mental health foundation

Youth Beyond Blue

Kids Helpline

I'm have only listed a few — I have a full long list at the back of each of my books.

About Rebecca



OVER THE PAST 25 YEARS...

Rebecca Sparrow has been a travel writer, a magazine editor, a newspaper columnist, a TV scriptwriter and a novelist. She is perhaps best-known as the author of three best-selling non-fiction books for teenage girls designed to help them navigate those tricky high school years. Those books include *Find Your Tribe (and 9 other things I wish I'd known in high school)*; *Find Your Feet (The 8 things I Wish I'd Known Before I Left High School)* and the best-selling *Ask Me Anything (heartfelt answers to 65 anonymous questions from teenage girls)*.

Aside from writing books Rebecca writes for Mamamia, plays agony aunt to teenage girls on the Ask Me Anything podcast and runs an online course called The Lighthouse Plan to help parents build deeper bonds with their daughters. Bec talks to thousands of high school students every year about friendship, resilience, giving back and life online. Rebecca is an ambassador for The Pyjama Foundation, ReachOut Parents and #TeamGirls a joint initiative by Suncorp and Netball Australia. In 2018 she was invited to be a member of the Queensland Government's Anti-Cyber Bullying Taskforce. She is a mother to three kids (including one tween girl!).

www.rebeccasparrow.com

Want to learn more?

CHECK OUT BEC'S WEBINARS

6 FRIENDSHIP LESSONS FOR TWEENS AND TEENS

Bec Sparrow's class on friendships, designed for you and your teen / tween

LEARN MORE

UNBREAKABLE

4 Tips to forge strong connections with your tween or teen

LEARN MORE

5 RULES FOR TEXTING/ MESSAGING FOR TWEENS AND TEENS

LEARN MORE

5 SECRETS TO SCHOOL

Bec's class on the five things students can do to have a positive experience in upper primary and high school.

LEARN MORE