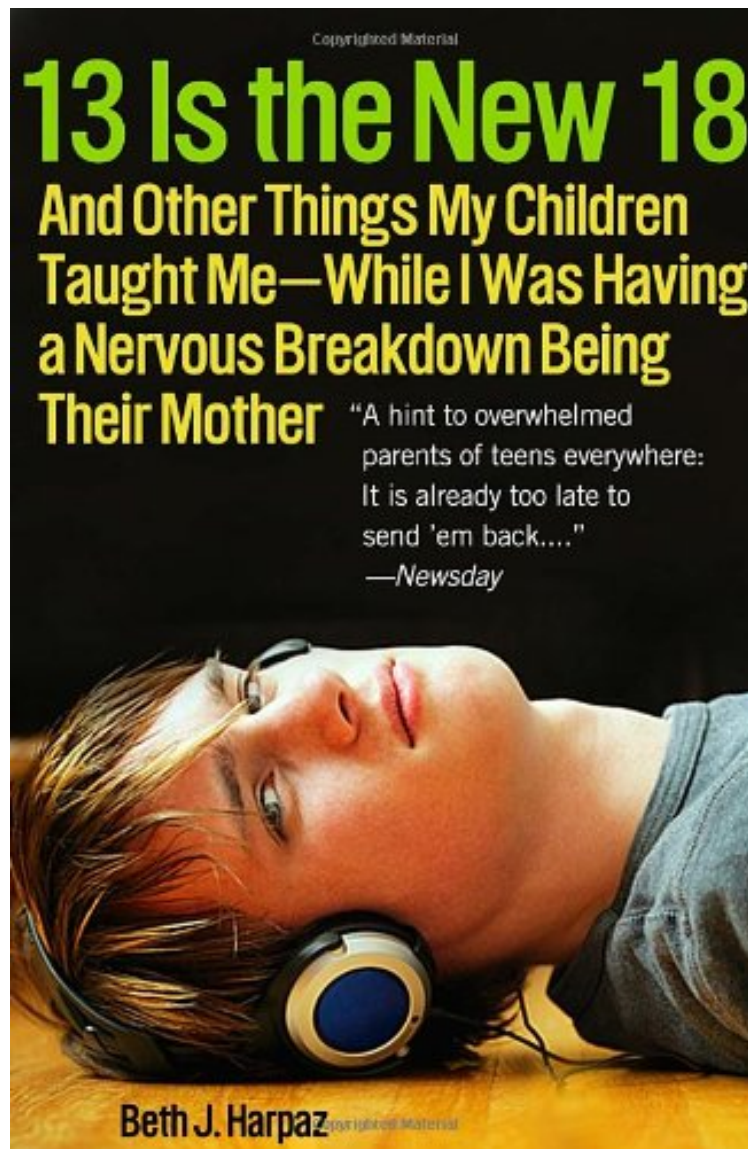


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13 Is the New 18: And Other Things My Children Taught Me--While I Was Having a Nervous Breakdown Being Their Mother

Beth J. Harpaz

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Beth J. Harpaz : 13 Is the New 18: And Other Things My Children Taught Me--While I Was Having a Nervous Breakdown Being Their Mother before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised 13 Is the New 18: And Other Things My Children Taught Me--While I Was Having a Nervous Breakdown Being Their Mother:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good, funny read. By Phil KI laughed out loud several times while I read this book. It was light and enjoyable. I read it in one afternoon. Especially loved the snippets of dialogue that the author recounts having with her son. As a mother of a 15 year old boy, I can definitely relate. The chapter on the family's vacation was very funny, with the son demanding from the back seat of their car that the author stop singing. The author's description of her son using an ipod while writing on his facebook page in front of the tv with the house phone and his cell phone placed next to him to ensure full access to his "peeps" might as well have been of my own son. I also appreciated the author's self-deprecating humor throughout. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Had to share it with friends. By Laura Barta I loved this book so much that I bought copies for two friends. It left me alternately squirming about what the teenage years might hold for my kids, and shrugging that it's mostly out of my control anyway, so why worry. This isn't a book that kept me up at night about my faults as a parent. In fact, it was very funny, and the author was so willing to admit her own faults, that it made me feel like I was listening to close friend who could only laugh at the situation we find ourselves in as the parents of teenagers. Read it and enjoy. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Somewhat entertaining. By A. Williams This book is an entertaining read, but I was expecting more advice I guess on how to handle the fact that my kids know more at 6 and 11 than I did at 18! With Internet, cable, social media, music, etc, sometimes they see and experience things I'd rather they didn't see. This book is more A look back at her son's 13th year. Disappointing.

"I wonder sometimes if there's something to the old superstition about the number thirteen. Maybe that superstition was originally created by the mothers in some tribe who noticed that in their children's thirteenth year, they suddenly became possessed by evil spirits. Because it did seem that whenever Taz was around, things spilled and shattered, calm turned into chaos, and tempers were lost." So laments the mother of one thirteen-year-old boy, Taz, a teen who, overnight it seemed, went from a small, sweet, loving boy to a hulking, potty-mouthed, Facebook/MySpace-addicted C student who didn't even bother to hide his scorn for being anywhere in the proximity of his parents. As this startling transformation floors journalist Beth Harpaz and her husband, Elon, Harpaz tries to make sense of a bizarre teenage wilderness of \$100 sneakers, clouds of Axe body spray (to hide the scent of pot?!), and cell phone bills so big they require nine-by-twelve envelopes. In the process, she begins chronicling her son's hilarious, sometimes harrowing, indiscretions, blaming herself ("I am a terrible mother" becomes her steadfast refrain), Googling unfamiliar teenage slang, reading every parenting book she can get her hands on, and querying friends who also have teens. From a derailed family vacation where Taz is more interested in trying to get a cell phone connection than looking at the world's largest trees (boring!), to a prom where Taz is caught with liquor, to a trip to Australia sans parents in which Taz actually doesn't get into any trouble and manages to do his own laundry, the events that mark Taz's newfound and troublesome independence are told with a wry and poignant voice by a woman who's both wistful for the past and trying her hardest to understand her son's head-scratching new behavior. In her quest to infiltrate his world by spying on his MySpace page (where he claims he's twenty-two), Harpaz expands her online monitoring and soon becomes a Facebook addict. She also reflects on her own youth and entry into middle age, and in the process achieves hard-won wisdom. A book for any parent of teens—be they girls or boys—13 Is the New 18 is a delightfully comical foray into today's increasingly widening generation gap and one mom's attempt to figure it all out with little guidance and a whole lot of misplaced guilt. From the Hardcover edition.

From Publishers Weekly In her new book, inspired by her AP story of the same name, Harpaz (*The Girls in the Van*) focuses on a year in the life of her 13-year-old son, nicknamed Taz. After his bar mitzvah, Taz crosses the bridge from the innocence of childhood into a world of iPods, baggy clothes, lewd song lyrics, questionable peers (he calls them peeps) and poor grades. Harpaz takes the change in stride, rifling through her son's room for contraband (she's not disappointed, finding a locked box of condoms and alcohol later revealed to be a plant), peering over his shoulder as he surfs MySpace and trying to figure out whether her rebellious child is normal or the result of her being a Terrible Mother. Readers follow Harpaz as she wrangles with such familiar topics as dragging a teen along on a vacation, homework and the all-consuming desire to be cool. Though the antics of an annoying teenager can be tedious—even for readers sympathetic to her situation—Harpaz has an engaging voice, and her outlook on everything from teen fashion to Facebook is fresh and funny. In spite of her insistence that she doesn't fit in with the Perfect Mommies, she and Taz get through a challenging year without major mishaps and plenty of laughs. (Feb.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "In her new book, inspired by her AP story of the same name, Harpaz (*The Girls in the Van*) focuses on a year in the life of her 13-year-old son, nicknamed Taz. After his bar mitzvah, Taz crosses the bridge from the innocence of childhood into a world of iPods, baggy clothes, lewd song lyrics, questionable peers (he calls them 'peeps') and poor grades. Harpaz takes the change in stride, rifling through her son's room for contraband (she's not disappointed, finding a locked box of condoms and alcohol later revealed to be a 'plant'), peering over his shoulder as he surfs MySpace and trying to figure out whether her rebellious child is normal or the result of her being a 'Terrible Mother.' Readers follow Harpaz as she wrangles with such familiar topics as dragging a teen along on a vacation, homework and the all-consuming desire to be cool. Though the antics of

an annoying teenager can be tedious—even for readers sympathetic to her situation—Harpaz has an engaging voice, and her outlook on everything from teen fashion to Facebook is fresh and funny. In spite of her insistence that she doesn't fit in with the 'Perfect Mommies,' she and Taz get through a challenging year without major mishaps and plenty of laughs."—Publishers Weekly

"Ever wish you could see inside the mind of your teenager? In *13 Is the New 18*, Beth Harpaz tells it like it is. Her poignant and acute look at what happens when her kids' rush to grow up crashes into her need to hold on to the little darlings is a hopeful roadmap for all of us obsessed, befuddled and anxious parents."—Anne Kreamer, author of *Going Gray: What I Learned About Beauty, Sex, Work, Motherhood, Authenticity and Everything Else that Really Matters*

"Beleaguered mothers of teenagers are not meant to take this book as a literal guide, but somehow I don't think I'm the only one carrying around a dog-eared copy full of passages underlined with a yellow highlighter. Even if Beth Harpaz were not so funny—but thank God she is—this book would have been worth every penny just for her tips on how to survive those painful phone calls from your child's guidance counselor."—Michelle Slatalla, author of *The Town on Beaver Creek*

"An engaging, moving, and ultimately uplifting story of parenting young teens in contemporary America. Conveyed with humor, insight, and warmth, *13 Is the New 18* reminds us that, despite its challenges, there is much about raising our teens that should make us proud, enthusiastic, and even hopeful."—Richard M. Lerner, Ph.D., author of *The Good Teen*

"The story of how a confused teenager taught a smart woman some important lessons about life... Take the wisdom of *What to Expect When You're Expecting*, fast forward a decade and a half, add a soupçon of candor, an endless stream of love and a dash of worry. Now shake. That's Beth Harpaz's parenting memoir *13 Is the New 18*. Harpaz is a warm and wise new voice."—Peg Tyre, formerly, a senior writer at Newsweek and author of *The Trouble with Boys*

"Hilarious, perceptive, and poignant... Harpaz's voice is a refreshingly candid one that entertains even as it reassures us normal, imperfect moms that we're not alone and that everything's gonna be okay." —Susan Borowitz, author of *When We're in Public, Pretend You Don't Know Me*

From the Hardcover edition.

About the Author BETH J. HARPAZ is an award-winning writer for the Associated Press and the author of *The Girls in the Van*. She lives in Brooklyn, New York, with her husband and two sons.

From the Hardcover edition.