

Education essay

[Family](#), [Parents](#)



Undercover Parent

In the article of Coben entitled “ The Undercover Parent” that was featured in New York Times, the topic is the limitations imposed on parents when stepping in the privacy world of their children. The main thesis of the article is that the act of installing a spyware of parents on their children’s computers is considered appropriate if the children are still minors, but for children who are aged 18 and above, such act of the parents is considered a violation of the right to privacy. The initial reaction of Coben is commendable since he believes that it is appropriate for parents to pry in the activities of their children by installing spyware in the computers to monitor the websites that the children visit. He thinks that this is just the parents’ instinct to protect the children from obscene websites or strangers who can harm their children. Although he considered the spyware as the means to conduct surveillance on the children’s own private world becomes “ scary” in the sense that parents can be overly protective over the children since they are mature enough to surf websites on the internet as well as the possible threats attached to these websites.

At a certain point, he failed to show in this article the negatives effect of prying and meddling of the parents such as the cause of restraint on their relationship with their children. He was able to point out that the primary issue now is trust. However, Coben failed to remind the parents that it is their responsibility to explain to their children from the start the value of responsible internet surfing. In fact, he should be mentioned that those parents who raised their children to become responsible adults know how to protect themselves from impending dangers that they may encounter along

the way.

Coben was correct when he identified parental responsibility to cover monitoring the websites that their minor children visit to avoid the risk of encountering pedophiles in chat rooms and cyber bullies who can take advantage of the vulnerability of minor kids. It is at this point that surveillance becomes appropriate because it is intended to protect the children from the possibility of encountering dangers. The author also correctly identified the role of parents to be vigilant of their children's constant use of cellphone to communicate with other people because they have no way of tracking the messages because it is a one-to-one activity. However, in the case of the older children, who have reached 18 years old and above, it will be a question of trust that can affect the parental relationship with the children. In this article, Coben failed to qualify the responsibility of minors and young adults. Hence, he should have mentioned that parents should install spyware for minor children for their protection. For the adult children, Coben should have mentioned that in the article that parents should not install spyware in their computers to monitor their internet activities. However, parents should know when to set the limitation since adolescence is the stage when teens encounter problems that which appear unworkable. However, Coben made a strong point when he mentioned one instance where a parent who installed spyware in her daughter's computer became an advantage because he discovered that his daughter was on drugs and was sleeping with the drug dealer. It opened the door for the parent to confront his daughter and have a heart-to-heart talk on how he can help her overcome her addiction and prevent her from

inflicting harm to herself.

The article could have been better if Coben explained that troubled teenaged children is a struggle to all parents, especially when the child continuously break house rules that cause alarm to their parents. He could have explained instances when children undergo the grueling battle which pushes them to become disruptive and anti-social. Coben could have improved the article by mentioning the positive indications of a troubled youth that may often result to juvenile delinquency. It is vital for the parents to see to it that the teenaged children are well-informed about the perils that they may encounter when joining social media sites. Finally, Coben should have stressed that the parents have the duty to determine if their children are responsible enough to deal with the impending harm caused by internet. This means that they have to honestly tell them the reason why they monitor their activities to avoid bringing out the rebellious streak among their children.