

# Spin Cycle - Going For A Spin, Kids and Driving

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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## SPEAKERS

Deana Thayer, Kira Dorrian, Future Focused Parenting



Future Focused Parenting 00:00

What happens when two parent coaches, one a Christian and the other an agnostic Jew, sit down to talk about parenting? They take their listeners from surviving to thriving. I'm Deana Thayer, and I'm Kira Dorrian. Welcome to Raising Adults, a podcast brought to you by Future Focused Parenting.



Kira Dorrian 00:22

Well, hi, everyone. Welcome to today's spin cycle where we are going to answer a listener question here in the laundry room. If this is your first time joining us in the laundry room, welcome, we are so excited that you're here with us. Before we dive into our listener question, I'd like to tell you some exciting news. We have some exciting news on Monday. And we're gonna announce it on Monday's podcast episode. But for those of you that subscribed to the attribute of the month, or our new subscribers who are receiving the video, Three Essential Strategies for Raising Adults, you are going to find out first what this big announcement is. And so I would encourage you listener if you are not subscribed to our email list, if you want to get that video, because why not? You are going to want to subscribe because we're actually going to announce to subscribers today. So subscribers are going to get an email telling you all about this exciting news. And I'm telling you right now it is something you get to be involved in. It's totally free. And it gives you access to us

to ask some questions, us in your pocket, at your fingertips. So if you think you want to be a part of that, I highly recommend that you go and subscribe to our email list right now, because that email is going out tonight. So you only have the daytime to get subscribed if you want early access to this exciting news and this exciting project that we're rolling out. So do subscribe, and you'll happen to get our awesome Three Essential Strategies for Raising Adults video. Like, why wouldn't you? If you're already subscribed and you got the attribute of the month, you're on our list, you don't have to worry about it. But if you haven't, here's what you're gonna do. You're gonna go to [bit.ly/raisingadultspodcast](https://bit.ly/raisingadultspodcast), all one word. So [bit.ly slash Raising Adults Podcast](https://bit.ly/RaisingAdultsPodcast). So be sure to do that, my friends, you can also go to our website [futurefocusedparenting.com](https://futurefocusedparenting.com). If you scroll down to the bottom, it says get your free video. That will get you subscribed. It's on the sidebar of our website. Like it's really hard to not subscribe.

D

Deana Thayer 02:27

Yeah, it's hard to miss.

K

Kira Dorrian 02:29

Yeah. So be sure to do it. Do it right now, if you want early access to this information, because trust me, you're gonna want that. Alright, we have a listener question we're gonna dive into. It's a great one. And Deana's gonna answer it, because she's the one who's got the great experience here. So this is from Jennifer. And Jennifer says, Deana, you've said that once your kids turned 16, you have no rules. And I was curious how this works when your kids start driving. One thing my parents did well, was a driving contract, which spelled out the requirements my parents had, as well as consequences for infractions. So that if something happened, like an accident, we all knew what would happen. And I really like that idea. So what have you done around driving so that you can offer your nearly adult children the opportunity to have their own rules, while still offering support that sets them up for success with something big like driving that can have pretty big life consequences? Such a good question, Jennifer, passing you over to Deana, she's gonna answer it.

D

Deana Thayer 03:25

I do love this question. Because, as with many things in life, there are exceptions. And interestingly, yes, we back away from a lot of what we might call, quote, rules in our house - curfew, other things like that - when the children demonstrate appropriate maturity, which is not always right at 16. To be fair, I mean, each kid is different. But around that age, we do kind of back off of those things. However, I actually do use driving contracts.

So I'm really glad that you asked this question, and I want to explain why. And a big piece of it is because of where the liability falls. So if my children mess up on something like coming home too late, and then they're tired the next day, they're the ones who are tired the next day. However, if they mess up by wrecking a car that I own, I have a problem. So part of it is just because we own the car, we carry the liability for the insurance, things like that. So the impact really falls to us. And so we feel it's important to enter into an agreement with our teens about how this responsibility will be handled. So we do actually do a driving contract and it covers all kinds of things like obeying the law, not using your phone in the car, we spell all of that out. My kids in particular really like to listen to music with their phones. So we even talked about like setting a playlist before you get on the road, things like that. And what was really helpful for us is because my kids have had chores, responsibilities, things like that their whole lives. We also talked about them keeping up their household responsibilities. And when they sign this contract and look at all these categories, when they're agreeing to that, we even have a section for instance, about grades. I know what kind of students my children are, and what I can expect from them academically. And they're really first job at this age is still to be a student. And so when they're signing this, they're essentially saying, okay, I agree, I'm entering into this. And they're signing the ability to have the privilege to drive and saying before this privilege, I'm willing to do these specific things. What also is helpful, which I totally agree with Jennifer about, is then it can also spell out what it would look like if something doesn't go great. So you can really put right in there, here's the consequences, whether it's losing the driving privilege, or something more practical, say, if you get a ticket, you're paying for that, you know, things like that. And that really helps them not be confused. And to just know what to expect. If this happens over here, I know this is the result. And I think that just helps set them up for success. Because they not only know what the expectation is, they know what will happen if they don't meet it. So it was interesting, but we did actually choose to do this.

K

Kira Dorrian 06:12

Yeah, well, I think it makes a ton of sense. And I love that you said that driving is a privilege. I think for parents, I can imagine how delightful it is like, I don't have to drive you anywhere anymore. And you know, it feels like a win for us. But it really is a privilege. And if they are taking their life into their hands, the lives of other people into their hands. And boy, oh, boy, they need to show responsibility in order to have that privilege. So I think that, I think it's so smart what you've done, and you did, you have a separate contract for driving, than you do for screens, than you do for, right? They're all different.

D

Deana Thayer 06:48

Correct. So we had, you know, for internet usage, or cell phone usage, we had one that was more generic character things, like here's our expectations about your behavior in the home, things like that. And so of course, that was super fun for them as they got older to watch those ones shrink, and eventually go away. They get to rip them up on their 16th birthday. It's very ceremonious. Lots of tiny papers everywhere. It's like our own ticker tape parade. So super fun. But you know, with this, I think there's just such an element, and we've talked about this before, where this also is kind of a new currency for them. And so it really is important for them to see it as a privilege. It's not a right. And so it can go away if you're not handling that privilege well. And I think that's really effective to know your child's currency, and driving definitely becomes one for most teens. You know that, that freedom that comes with the ability to drive or go meet a friend, is a really powerful currency for them. So one other thing I just want to make sure to mention is that, you know, the other elements in our household that start to go away at around 16 are things they've been practicing a long time, like decision making, how to decide when to be home based on what I have going on the next day, talking about, do I choose to go to a party where I know this is happening? How do I balance homework and activities? All of that they've been practicing for a long time, cell phone use, social media use, and so they're starting to own and take ownership of things they've had a lot of practice at. However, driving is new around this time. And I just feel like I would be doing them a disservice to hand them something brand new, and go good luck with that and give full freedom. I really believe in this idea of increasing freedom and privilege with increasing responsibility. So they deserve the chance to practice this skill as well, before fully fully owning it. And absolutely, once the car is in their name, they have their own car, or they've moved out, I don't have jurisdiction over this. So I think it really has a beautiful opportunity to fall off organically. But I just didn't want them to be handed something so huge that they haven't even really learned how to grapple with and how to manage in their life. And that's another reason we keep the contract in place at least while they live at home and we own the car.

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Kira Dorrian 09:03

And what do you do about insurance and gas?

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Deana Thayer 09:05

Great question. So our children contribute to insurance, but they don't pay all of it. And they contribute as soon as they have a job. But we really believe in having a part time job once you're driving because there's this element of you're going to probably want to do things sometimes just for fun. So I cover gas if my children are driving somewhere that I would have used to be chauffeuring to. So I'm happy to pay the gas money because now

I'm not taking my time to do that. So if you're going to school, if you're taking someone to an activity, if you're driving yourself to rehearsal, great. I'm happy to cover your gas. If you just want to meet your friends at the mall, have fun, and you can cover that.

K

Kira Dorrian 09:43

But how do you, how do you differentiate you know, you got a full tank of gas they're going to use some on school and some of it for rehearsals and some of it for friends.

D

Deana Thayer 09:49

So what we used to do is like a gas allowance, a weekly gas allowance, and if they filled up their tank and went all the fun places and then didn't have enough money to go to something they needed to be at, then they got to explain to the leader of that activity why they missed. And so it was really great. We moved a little bit away from that, and it's a little more piecemeal now. If my son, for instance, is driving to school all week and rehearsal all week, we talk about how much that would cost. If he's asking me for money because he wants to go meet a friend at a restaurant, then that's when I say, you know, I'm going to actually invite you to use your own money for that. So it hasn't been as stringent and there again, that's on purpose and by design. We have a real system in place, and then slowly, the scaffolding moves away, and it becomes a little more fluid and we talk through, hey, you're asking me for something that's really a want, and it's a fun thing. It's not, I have to be there. Then that's going to be on you to buy some gas for that. So we encourage the job to help. We also have told at least the ones who, who for, for whom this is reasonable, that if you have the good student discount, if you lose that you will pay us the difference on your insurance. So that just really helps motivate them to continue to keep their grades up. And remember again, that their primary job is to be a student.

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Kira Dorrian 10:09

I love it. Thanks, Deana. Jennifer, I hope that answered your question. I'm sure there's lots of us out there, myself included, that are like driving, that's gonna happen one day. So that's very, very helpful. Thank you. So listener, remember, go and subscribe to our newsletter if you haven't already. You are gonna want to get in on this exciting thing that we are announcing on Monday. So be sure to listen on Monday. If you're not subscribed, and you're choosing not to be subscribed. You can also, guess what? You can also subscribe through social media. And you know, while you're there, follow us. That's be fun.



Deana Thayer 11:38

That's a good idea.



Kira Dorrian 11:38

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Deana Thayer 11:52

Easy peasy.



Kira Dorrian 11:53

Be in the know. So join us friends. We are excited to tell you the big news on Monday. Have an awesome weekend and we will talk to you then.



Future Focused Parenting 12:01

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