

## BOOK

# Authors offer advice to parents dealing with adult children who return home

By **Claudia Feldman**

Step back. Stay connected. Step back. Stay connected.

This isn't the latest move in dance class but parenting advice for would-be empty nesters who are surprised and bemused to see their adult children moving back into their old bedrooms.

It's also a running theme in the new book "When Will My Grown-

Up Kid Grow Up?"

If you are the proud parent of an adult who is rocking the job market, marriage and parenthood, save your \$23.95.

If, however, you have boomerang sons and/or daughters who are no longer adolescents but not full-fledged adults, you might want to take a peek at this good-humored parents' guide.

Co-authors Jeffrey Arnett and Elizabeth Fishel make the case that

the road to adulthood is much longer today than it was 50 years ago.

Now, they say, 30 is the new 20, and it may take those extra 10 years for offspring to be self-supporting, involved in serious, long-term relationships and at least

considering children of their own.

Arnett, a psychologist, researcher and authority on post adolescents,

and Fishel, an author, journalist and parent to two-20-something sons, call this new life stage "emerging adulthood."

And it's really OK, they tell worried parents. Everybody grows up eventually.

### Here are 10 of their tips and observations:

**1** Remember that offspring ages 18 to 29 are not children. Said Arnett, "You can't treat them like they are 3 or 13."

**2** Give up on curfews. Stop waiting up for them, too.

**3** And yes, they should treat you with respect and help with chores.

**4** Maybe you're wondering why it's taking the kids so long to fully mature.

Arnett and Fishel answer: The availability of birth control means there's no need to marry to have sex.

And, an economy skewed to information and technology requires a work force with more education and training.

Also, young women with career goals and aspirations of their own are in no rush to get married.

**5** Best advice: learn to be patient; supportive is good; intrusive is bad; surrender control.

**6** It's not unreasonable to charge your emerging adults rent. On the other hand, that payment to you now may delay their departure later.

**7** Let your offspring enjoy their successes and learn from their failures. If, however, you see them behaving dangerously, by all means, intercede.

**8** Hearing unhelpful advice from friends and relatives? Don't listen. Tune them out.

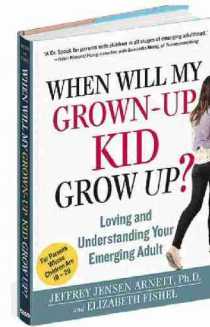
**9** Just a few things best left unsaid: Have you set a date for the wedding? Have you gained weight? When are you getting a haircut?

**10** Just like your kids, you are moving into a new life stage. It's OK, in fact it's smart to focus on yourself. Just don't be surprised if you have some growing pains, too.

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**Jeffrey Arnett is an author, psychologist and researcher.**



### 'When Will My Grown-Up Kid Grow Up?'

By Jeffrey Jensen Arnett and Elizabeth Fishel  
Workman, 286 pp., \$23.95

