

Define sweet

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She turns 16 today, our baby girl.

Isn't it "sweet 16" you ask.

Anyone who has ever lived with a teenage girl knows "sweet" is not the adjective used most to describe them.

Temperamental or moody, sulky or grouchy, opinionated or demanding, but sweet? Not often.

While some of her school teachers of the past 10 years might give her glowing marks on citizenship and printed little notes on her report card "A pleasure to have in class," I have to wonder?

Is the girl who sits in their class each day the same girl who grumbles when you remind her to keep her showers under 20 minutes?

Is she the same girl who glares at you when you mention that texting on her cell phone 24/7 isn't a right, it's a privilege?

Is she the same girl who rollers her eyes when asked to turn her music down?

Is the student who is reportedly helpful and kind in the classroom the same girl who screams at her brother for teasing her and curses the dog for being a dog?

I looked, but couldn't find the origin or definition of the term "Sweet 16." Maybe it's meant to be a joke, an oxymoron, a backward attempt at humor.

I received a call this week from a friend who saw our "sweet" daughter in action, away from her parents watchful eye, on her own, being sweet.

The friend called, she said, to tell me what a nice daughter we have. They had visited at the district wrestling tournament last week, she said, and our daughter was polite and friendly, courteous and kind. She's just a doll, and the friend wanted us to know.

Yes, that sounds like our Stephani.

The grumbles and glares, that teenage attitude she sometimes gives in various doses, is something she saves for her worst days.

It is typical, but nothing serious, compared to the trouble, the lies, the angst that some parents of teenagers deal with daily.

More often than not, we too see the sweet side of our daughter; the daughter who empties the dishwasher without being asked, who thanks me for cooking dinner, who gives us a hug as she walks through the room.

She turned 16 today, our baby girl, and yes, she's pretty darn sweet.