



Open Letter To Connor... what will you say to your son on his birthday?

By Tommy Maloney

This month marks the anniversary of my son Connor being on this planet or I could just simply say it is his 10th birthday. I am still shocked to think that ten years has passed by that quickly. Within the ten years obviously things have changed and not always for the better but unfortunately this is what life is about.

When life knocks you down it is all about how you get back up on your feet for the next challenge. There is one eerie similarity between Connor and me as far as our early lives. That is my parents divorced when I was around five, just like Connor's parents. However the major difference was how each of us handled this adjustment.

For me it was actually watching my dad leave my mom and me. This was a very visual memory that was tattooed on my brain and I was not going to create that for Connor. I know that my parents had a major impact in my life and honestly I do not feel that I handled the alteration subconsciously very well. As a kid I will admit that at times I was an emotional mess. This is where I want to take my article to this month. For my contribution is an open letter to the birthday boy and how proud I am of him.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY DUDE!! I cannot believe that ten years ago you were born. I will always remember that day; it actually started the night before as I was working at the ice rink driving a Zamboni. Your mom called me to say it was time. I will never forget apartment because it was Irish tradition that if it rains luck. So I equated to your in my opinion was very right hospital and settled into the turned on a hockey game. for your birth as daddy funny thing is well what night turned into morning so world and I became a dad. scary thing because I never major step but I did and I'm extremely happy that I did, ZERO regrets.

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the drive from the rink to the starting to snow and there is an on your wedding day that is good birth with the Irish folklore which on point. Once we got to the room I did the guy thing and Ah there is nothing like waiting watches a hockey game. The sport do you play today? That at 5:04 AM you came into the Yes dude becoming a dad was a thought I would have taken that

I Became A Stay At Home Dad

Your mom and I discussed about me staying home with you to save money on day care. During this time I was working nights at one of the local ice hockey rinks as an Ice resurface drive or in English a Zamboni driver. My



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world changed as a stay at home dad because as an only child I did not babysit nor had that experience so this was all new to me. In the working world we call this "on the job training." I have a great picture that is of you the first day of not only your mom going back to work but our first day of as a team. One of our routines together was to walk around the local mall so you could look at the lights (you loved to do that at Target as well). A piece of advice that a mom gave me was to make sure I got in a shower every day. I was able to accomplish this by putting you in your swing as you watched (not kids shows) ESPN. Yes we watched the world famous Sesame Street but you enjoyed (ok I was being a dad) watching the sports highlights. Once your mom admitted to me that she was jealous of our relationship because when I would leave to go to work you would cry; funny thing was that to calm you down she would have you watch hockey.

Then Back To Work Full Time And You Onto Daycare

There finally came a time that our relationship needed to take a different direction. Yes it was time for both of us to find new friends and begin a new phase in our lives. I went back to full time work and you went to daycare. You were very blessed to be at an in home day care with your friend Josh because even to this day you are friends and go to the same school. This was a new opportunity for me as well because I learned how to let you go and grow all at the same time. I have to admit I had several self-doubting talk because I did not have the babysitting training; I was a pretty good stay at home dad and I know this because not once did



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you need stitches from me accidentally leaving you on the bed. OK confession time dude, you were on the bed and I reached to answer the phone you fell off. Sorry and yes it was a rookie mistake. Again no stitches and we both survived that episode.



Then Came Divorce

Ironically, and you know this already, but we were around the same age when our parents divorced. Connor, I never imagined that this was going to happen to our family and I do not tell you enough how proud I am of how you handled this new life change. I look back at my life to see what a mental mess I was and you are even today a lot stronger mentally than I was. Divorce is never that easy and yes we can talk about the summer of 2009 where we both had changes in our lives and because of that time frame you and I just could not connect. On some Friday nights I would pick you up and with-in an hour or two you wanted to be back at home. Lucky for you that because my parents went through a divorce I could relate to your feelings and as hard as it was to take you to your mom's house, I understood. We went through this routine time after time during that summer until something and I do not know what or how your change occurred but a change none of the less. All I can say was that you were fun again.

I never know what to ask you or how to ask you about things that are going on between your mother and me. The whole court thing is that example. I had to keep my emotions to myself as well as my thoughts because I did not know what your mom said about court and I did not want to add any pressure to you. The thing is that I knew you did not want to really move to Wisconsin but being able to spend more time

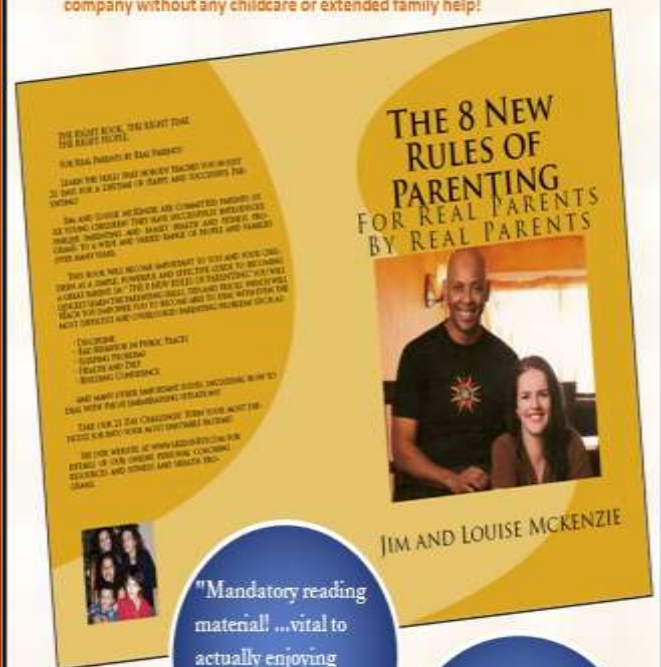
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I was in so much pain for six months; the day that your mom sent me the email stating that you wanted to move until the day of the ruling by the judge. Once the judge said that your mom could not take you out of state it was like Christmas morning and the best present ever. I hope you know that I fought for you just like the dad in one of our favorite movies "Real Steel" and would do it again for you.

with your cousins there is what you really did want. I got that but what I do not know if it was described to you in detail that we would not see each other. I was in so much pain for six months; the day that your mom sent me the email stating that you wanted to move until the day of the ruling by the judge. Once the judge said that your mom could not take you out of state it was like Christmas morning and the best present ever. I hope you know that I fought for you just like the dad in one of our favorite movies "Real Steel" and would do it again for you.

And Now... Your 10th Birthday

You already know that we are going to do an ice skating party for your birthday with your hockey friends. I still am in shock that you are ten years old and yes it is true that time does fly. Connor you do not know how you saved my life but I will save that for another time but I can honestly say you have added value to my life. I love going to your school

and the kids simply calling me "Connor's dad." I know my life would be so much different if you were not born on March 11, 2003 at 5:04 AM and to many that is a well DUH statement. I do not know where I would be living today nor with whom.

With you the world is going to be a better place. Things like the stuff you make to sell to people in front of the house to the coloring book that you and your bonus sister created. Yes as you get older I am going to do my best not just as your dad but a mentor to help you along your path to success.

Connor as a parent one of the most valuable statements we say to our kids is that we want you to do better than we you to do better than we have while on the planet. I have no doubt of this with you because of the life skills you already have. For you the ability to make friends is a wonderful trait. Not only do you show that you care about others but others honestly care about you. So at your party and you watch the Zamboni drive on the ice, please think about this letter to you because that Zamboni will always remind me of you and coming into this world. That night of taking your mom to the hospital, watching hockey waiting for you and now not only do you watch hockey but you play it. I am still not sure if I had any influence on that.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY
CONNOR!!!!!!!!!!!!**



About Tommy...

Tommy Maloney is a highly successful trainer, and coach who has worked with companies such as CBS Radio, DR. Pepper/Snapple Group and United Rentals.

Tommy's company Tommy Maloney International LLC is his business where his niche is about helping dads stay connected with their kids after a divorce. Not only has Tommy lived through this as a child of divorce but also as a parent. Tommy speaks and writes about this topic in his own and unique way.

Comments, Questions?
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