

I never thought I'd be a parent and yet here I am, almost 40 years old and my eldest son, Zeb, is about to graduate high school. The other three children, Taylor, my daughter, Micah, the middle child, and Jake, their leader, are in elementary school. Being a punk rock parent has its challenges. I suppose my language is a little, uh, salty, to be a common visitor at PTA meetings and I have to be careful to hold my tongue. This past year, my daughter asked me to come to her kindergarten class for show-and-tell. My wife and I had bought the kids a small, three-quarter sized guitar earlier that summer and she wanted to show it off. I brought an acoustic guitar, along with a Fender "Hello Kitty" Strat, and the kid's mini-guitar. Playing in front of a bunch of noisy five year olds was pretty stressful. I sweated a lot in front of them. But it was great. My daughter was a little rock star that day and I had a lot of fun, pretending to play with my teeth.

We bought the mini guitar to encourage them to play music. When I was growing up, I took piano lessons, but rock and roll, and punk rock especially, was avidly discouraged. I do not want them to grow up feeling that certain kinds of music is taboo or evil, like I did. The boys have Ipods (They bought them with their own money) and Taylor has a portable CD player. They regularly ask me to update their Ipods with music they hear coming out of my room, but they have their own music too, like the Jonas Brothers or whoever else the Disney Channel is pushing on them that week. Jake likes rap music, so I have put Disposable Heroes of Hiphoprisy on his Ipod and said, "You like rap? Here, listen to this." I'm not sure that was what he was looking for. Micah is my rocker child. He likes to ride in my car and I blast Ted Nugent and Motorhead, and much to my delight, he digs them too.



The other weekend, I had all three kids in the car and was driving them home. They asked me to put something on the CD player, so I chose Melt Banana's, "Charlie." I skipped to the song, "Area 877." The first minute of the song is a pastiche of voices saying "Melt Banana." It was recorded by Agata, the guitarist, in Phoenix, Arizona on the Mr. Bungle "Disco Volante" tour. At the time, I was working for Bungle. Nevertheless, Agata used a mini-disc recorder (it may have been a portable DAT player) to record us saying "Melt Banana." All the guys in Bungle and a few of the guys in the road crew all contributed something. I

believe I was the voice that did the low Death Metal voice, and a higher pitched Grind voice, but I'm not sure. Anyway, while we were listening to the song, I could tell that they were getting excited. Then, around the one minute mark, the voice collage ends and what sounds like a jet airplane taking off into a large buzz saw, followed by a nuclear bomb kicks in. If you have heard Melt Banana, you know what you're in for. If not, check it out. They're amazing. To my amazement, the kids loved it. They all screamed, "I want that song on my Ipod!" There's a little part in the song when the speaker says something about the hardness of a cock.



(I know who it is, but I'm not saying). I put the song into Garageband and edited that part out. That's the version I gave to the kids. I'm all for them listening to crazy shit, but I don't want them quoting the song to one of their teachers.

Being a punk rock parent is a lot of fun and I'm blessed to be their "big papa".

Steve Hart - Order of the White Rose