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From Wiggles To Wolfmother...

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There was a time when the kids and I used to listen to the same music, and dance the same dances. We certainly knew how to point our fingers and do the twist, and could yell, "Wake up, Jeff!" nice and loud.

We loved the song about the little green frog on *Playschool* and used to wave our hands in unison and sing, "We all know frogs go 'la de da de da'..." We did the Avocado Mash and the Dinosaur Stomp. I could waggle my imaginary dinosaur tail really well and impress the kids.

Times have changed. Max is the ringleader in a recent mission to make our music collection more contemporary. A few weeks ago he said, "Could we please listen to the radio in the car, instead of your CDs? They're a bit... ummm... boring. No offence, Mum."

I figured it was a reasonable request from a boy who'll soon be in high school, and doesn't want to be totally ignorant of the popular music scene, so now we listen to a lot more Top 40 stuff.

I think that makes it official. The Wiggles are out, and Wolfmother is in. *Playschool* has made way for Pink and the Pussycat Dolls. Sigh. I miss the old days. I can't waggle anything like those Pussycat Dolls do.

I like a lot of the music, but I find myself raising my eyebrows at some of the lyrics, and feeling thankful that some of it is beyond my decoding ability anyway. Take one of Max's current favourites, for instance, called 'Dance Wiv Me' (yes, it really is spelt wiv a 'v') by Dizzee Rascal:

"I wanna take this further than the dancefloor
I ain't forceful but I'm still hardcore
You're gonna give me everything I ask for
It's not a long ting, you're the boom ting
Maybe more than a hotel room ting..."

It's a long way from the dancing frogs, isn't it? I quite like the song, but is it really suitable for Max and Lauren to listen to? Pondering this question made me remember back - waaaaa back through the mists of time - to when I was Max's age, and about to make that big, exciting step from child to teenager.

It was then that Skyhooks burst onto the music scene. "You just like me 'cos I'm good in bed!" screamed Shirl in 1974. At the time, I didn't know what being 'good in bed' meant, only that it must be something naughty, since the song had been banned from the airwaves.

One of my friends had been allowed to buy the album and we listened to it in her bedroom, giggling and feeling very grown up, even if we were clueless about the content. (For years I thought ego actually was a dirty word, thanks to Skyhooks.)

Other songs of that era were more subtle, like 'Afternoon Delight'. I used to wonder what the oldies thought it was about - a nice cup of tea and a buttered scone, perhaps? My friends and I felt smug that we knew the meaning and, assuming our parents' ignorance, gleefully sang along.

And what about the seduction scene in Rod Stewart's 'Tonight's The Night'? If I try to decipher Dizzee Rascal's lyrics, it seems he's a step behind Rod, since Dizzee's still on the dance floor - he hasn't even got her to the hotel room (ting) yet.

So, on reflection, I think it is only right and proper for popular music to push the boundaries, and for young folk to enjoy this. I turn a parental deaf ear to much of the music that now provides the musical accompaniment to our lives. Within reason, of course. I'd put my foot down if it was anything really offensive - like Delta Goodrem.

Yes, I know - I am being unfair to Delta. It's a personal thing; I'm sure she's a lovely girl, but the way she wafts around in long frocks and wails so mournfully really annoys me. Fortunately, the kids don't like her either, so we're all much happier listening to Pink being pugilistic.

I'm switching on that parental deaf ear right now. Max has just put on his latest CD and 'Dance With Me' is reverberating around the house. It really is quite a catchy song.

"She ain't no hoe, look at those thighs, it's in her eyes, she's good to go," croons Dizzee.

Luckily for me, I have no idea what he's talking about, although I have a nagging suspicion that whatever it is may have been banned in 1974. Never mind - it's 3pm. Time for some afternoon delight. Cup of tea and a buttered scone, anybody?

Do you ever have to switch on your parental deaf ear?

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