

Totally Okay, Right Now excerpt

*The last sung line of the Happy Birthday song can be heard, and then the blowing out of candles.
Lights up on LIZZIE*

LIZZIE

(To audience, as a friend)

Wow. WOW! I am like, old! Well, older. Do I feel older? Do I feel different? Like a teenager? I think I should. Should I? Whatever. Guess what? I got a phone!

She thrusts a cell phone over her head in a jubilant sign of victory. She then dials. Lights up on KATH, answering her cell phone.

It's Lizzie. I got one!

(They both scream simultaneously)

I'm calling Alisha.

She hangs up and redials. Lights up on Alisha, answering a regular house phone.

It's Lizzie. I got one!

(They both scream simultaneously)

I'm calling Megan.

She hangs up and redials. Lights up on Megan, answering her cell phone.

I got one!

She opens her mouth to scream but Megan cuts her off.

MEGAN

I know, Lizzie. Kath called me. It is so cool!

LIZZIE

Kath called you already!? But-

MEGAN

-I know but she's...Kath, you know? Anyway...

(Megan begins screaming. Lizzie joins in)

Lights out on Megan

LIZZIE (CONT'D)

This weekend, my dad said-

DAD

The world is your oyster, Lizard.

Lights out on Dad

LIZZIE

(To audience)

Yeah, I know. I had no idea either. My mom explained it-

MOM

-Sort of like you're the next Jane Goodall, Georgia O'Keefe, Ruth Bader Ginsberg.

LIZZIE

(To audience)

Yeah, still no clue, right? Me either. Which made my mom none too happy.

MOM

I'm calling the school.

Lights out on Mom

LIZZIE

She gets like that. Don't panic. She never does call. She doesn't want to alienate the teachers. And my grades are awesome...mostly...except...well, we'll get to that. But the grades, growing up thing is that people are really beginning to bug me about-

Lights up on Dad

DAD

So? What are you going to do when you grow up? You're thinking about the law, right? Like your old dad here. You have the mind. The way you analyze-

Lights up on Mom

MOM

-Or whatever you want. You could be whatever you want. Or a graphic designer. I know everyone in the industry-

OTHER MOM enters

OTHER MOM

(Wearing a t-shirt which says, "Kath's Mom")

You just need to be successful. And focused. Discipline. Slackers make nothing.

Other Mom takes off her t-shirt, revealing a second t-shirt which says, "Alisha's Mom"

Or you could be a teacher. Give back to your community.

Other Mom takes off her t-shirt, revealing a third t-shirt which says, "Teacher"

Your test scores are excellent in the language arts and social sciences. You could do AP classes next year. Good for college placement. It's not too early to be thinking about that-

Other Mom takes off her t-shirt, revealing a fourth t-shirt which says, "Megan's Mom"

What are you going to be? Geez, I still haven't figured that one out. Want another Pop Tart?

LIZZIE

I really like hanging at Megan's place. Anyway...I'm thinking I should come up with some sort of answer. Decide, you know? My science teacher says-

Other Mom takes off her t-shirt, revealing a fifth t-shirt which says, "Teacher"

OTHER MOM as SCIENCE TEACHER

How you act now is how you will, what you enjoy and excel at now, can easily determine what you will succeed at in the future.

LIZZIE

(Struggling to remember)

Something like what you are good at today is what you will be good at in the future? Past behavior and the future? Anyway, it sounded really good in class so I'm going to do that. This year, I am going to decide what Lizzie is going to be so everyone will get off my back. This year? The Lizzie Decides Year! But first, I have to really decide!!!

Mom, Dad and Other Mom exit. Megan rolls out a bureau which has clothes spewing out of all the drawers.

Don't look at me like that. I have a system!

She digs and pulls out a few t-shirts. She holds up the first one. It has "TWEEN" printed on it. She tosses it aside.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)

Clearly, so "Last Year"

Holding up the next one, which says "TEENAGER"

It's weird. I don't think...I mean, I am but...I don't think I'm quite...feeling it. Yet.

She shoves that t-shirt deeply into a drawer. Next one: "BROODING, REBELLIOUS TEENAGER"

This would SO freak Mom and Dad out! But I'll be kind *(with a wink/evil smile)* today.

She dives back in the drawer

Got it!

With a flourish, she pulls out a t-shirt with the printing "GIRL WITH HER OWN CELL PHONE"

Kind of says it all!

She quickly pulls it on, adds a vest and decorative, glittery scarf, grabs a backpack and heads to exit.

MOM
(Offstage)

Coat!

LIZZIE

Mom, it's warm.

Lizzie points to the upstage window. Megan and Alisha hold up a poster of palm trees on a beach behind it.

MOM
(Still offstage)

It's freezing. Look outside.

Kath brings out another poster, of the frozen Alaskan tundra, and the three girls switch the poster.

LIZZIE

I don't have time. I'll be late for the bus. *(As a threat)* You'll have to drive me.

Mom staggers onstage with a huge snowsuit, snow pants, boots, muffler, and gloves

MOM

Not if you put everything on right now.

LIZZIE

You are clearly trying to ruin my life.

MOM

Everyone needs a hobby.

She tries to shove and wrestle Lizzie into the coat. In the meantime, the three girls switch the poster to a fall day with turning leaves.

LIZZIE

MOM!

Mom has succeeded in cramming a hat and mittens on Lizzie. Lizzie then does a battle crawl to the door and runs for her life, coat not on, hat and mittens on but askew

(To audience)

This is one of the reasons mild mannered girls become crazed. Did you see what that woman just tried to do to me? Embarrassment, heat exhaustion, and lack of trust. All in 30 seconds. Do they offer a class in parental smothering? Or is it just developmental, like gray hair and totally obsessing about gas prices?

Lizzie pulls off the hat and mittens and joins the crowd in a school hallway.

You met my friends but let me introduce you again. This is Kath.

Kath steps forward

I've known Kath the longest. She is completely awesome at sports, especially soccer and volleyball. She's bossy. It's okay. She knows it. Grades just passing but it doesn't seem to bother her. One brother. Parents together. Her mom is...kind of intense but her dad is nice and always brings McDonalds if he knows we're coming over. She's going to be a world class athlete and then a sportscaster for ESPN.

Alisha steps forward

LIZZIE (CONT'D)

Alisha, really funny but in a quiet way, and super sweet. Always tells the truth, except when it will hurt your feelings and then she tries to lie but she is really bad at it, so you know anyway. Good singer and rocks at crafts. An older sister and a younger brother, Toby, he has Downs Syndrome. Parents together, nice, really religious. You can't swear at her house but they always have really good snacks. She's going to have her own crafting, sewing TV show on cable and be a professional singer.

Megan appears

Megan is super-super smart and good at science. She is what everyone calls a problem solver and she likes it even though she says she doesn't. She also loves to sing but really stinks at it. Watching her ask Alisha how she sounds when we do karaoke is the funniest, most painful thing ever. Parents divorced. Her mom has HBO and Showtime at their place. She has to go to therapy but we all think it is really for her folks. She doesn't have any brothers or sisters but her cousin Drew is in an actual rock band in California. Doctor and maybe research scientist.

MEGAN

Innocent Slime. That's their name. Drew's band. What about you?

LIZZIE

What?

MEGAN

Tell them about you. What you are, what you are going to do.

LIZZIE

That's hard.

(Pause. Then points to her t-shirt)

I'm a girl with a cell phone!

MEGAN

(To audience) Lizzie has an extensive vocabulary, is really good at Language Arts and Social Studies. She is always nice to new kids and other kids who are, you know, different or something, but not in a fakey way but in a cool way. Parents together. She has the biggest room out of all of us. Her mom only buys whole wheat, healthy snack stuff, doesn't believe in soda, but they have four scooters so we can all go out at the same time, even though one of the scooters is a little busted. I think she should be an editor, like for the New York Times or Pop Stars magazine.

KATH

Supreme Court lawyer or business.

ALISHA

You can be my manager. Or maybe my agent?

LIZZIE

STOP! Class. Let's just go to class! (*To audience*) Here we go. The beginning of the "Lizzie Decides" year.

ALISHA

Don't worry. We'll help.

MEGAN

Empirical data will be collected. I can make a graph.

KATH

I can just decide for you.

LIZZIE

Oh boy. It's going to be a long year.

END SCENE ONE