

BIGIMOTIK
corporate skills adapted for a cosplayer world



Cosplaying with Your Parents Around

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Cosplaying with Your Parents Around (Starting the Hobby)

Cosplay is a wonderful expression of creativity, but if you're still a minor living at home, having a parent around can be exasperating. For some, getting their parents on board is tricky: you may feel like your parents (or guardians) are giving you the "weird eye" or being unsupportive. If that is the case, you might want to have a talk with them about cosplay.

Let them know what this is

Parents (or friends) may see cosplay as a childish activity that involves making Halloween a year-round event. You can help make them understand cosplay is more than that. Cosplay can be casual, it can be competitive, it can be fun, but it can also be serious. Regardless, cosplayers are passionate doing what they do and helping your parents see your passion will go a long way.

You may also want to introduce them to the fandom that you're cosplaying from. I know that my sister and I spent a while explaining the oddities of anime when we were starting on our first cosplays (e.g. yes, I know he's got bright blonde hair and wears a neon-orange jumpsuit, but I swear he's a ninja....)

Explain the benefits of cosplay

Whether you are buying or making your cosplay, it forces you to use skills that will be useful in real life: working a budget, time management, negotiating/bargaining (if doing commissions), setting goals, and delivering results by a certain deadline.

Think of all the useless things you could be doing with your time rather than cosplaying: texting/tweeting, mindlessly surfing the Internet, lazing around the house etc.

Cosplay has a thriving community with many friendly people - there are thousands of chances to meet new people, both online and in real life. Emphasize the networking possibilities.



Make it clear that you have your priorities straight

Parents may be worried that you'll go for cosplay over studying, chores, work etc. This cannot be the case - real world responsibilities come first. Let your parents know this and then follow through! I cannot stress enough that you need to prioritize smartly.

Get them involved

You might be surprised at how interested they get - also, you never know what tricks they have up their sleeves. For example, my dad loves taking photos, so when I was starting out, I would go to him to get some high-quality photos of my costumes.

Photo Credit: My Dad © 2004



Cosplaying with Your Parents Around (Picking a Costume)

You've made the decision to start cosplaying and spoken to your parents, but sooner or later, you get into an argument about wearing a particular costume.

The most common fight my sister and I had with our mother was about whether a costume was age appropriate or not. Now, I'm not even talking about [extremely skimpy costumes](#), we were just arguing about being able to show [a little midriff](#). We argued with her about regular clothes too.

Try to understand where your parents are coming from

Our mother's main concern was that we would be dressed in these outfits at a convention where not-so-chivalrous men (and women) would be roaming the halls. She didn't want us drawing inappropriate or negative attention to ourselves.

She has a point: revealing costumes draw attention of all types. If you wear a skimpy costume, be prepared to hear everything and anything. Although it's appalling that it does happen, you might end up drawing unwanted physical contact.

Your parents just want to spare you from dealing with any of that. It's good advice, especially for when you're younger.

Try to find a compromise

There are millions of costumes to pick from - who says that you need to do this costume now? Wait until you're a little older before taking on the more mature costumes. My sister waited until she was in college before tackling costumes that showed more bust, legs, and stomach.

Alternately, change the design to make it more modest. This is usually what I do with my costumes - cover up certain areas, make hemlines a tad bit longer, raise the bust line a little etc. You can still show your appreciation for the character even if your look isn't 100% accurate.



Listen and Reap in the Benefits

Taking your parents' concerns into consideration and finding a compromise shows maturity on your part. Your parents remember when you make smart, rational decisions and are bound to be more trusting and lenient later (not just in terms of cosplay).



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Cosplaying with Your Parents Around

(Making the Costume)

You've got your parents or guardians on board with cosplay and you've picked a costume that both of you can agree on, but now it's time to make the cosplay!

As you start crafting your little heart out, be mindful of your parents'/guardians' home. They have made huge emotional and financial investments to their home and you **MUST** be mindful of that.

What does that mean?

Don't destroy their home!

1. Avoid crafting on or near surfaces that can't be cleaned easily such as carpet. Cover any surfaces you do craft on such as wooden tables.
2. Use appropriate padding, mats, and boards for cutting or hammering to prevent scratching or cracking surfaces.
3. Only use approved containers for mixing, soaking, and rinsing. Don't use your parent's soup pot for dyeing fabric; don't rinse paint using their glassware.
4. Ask before using tools. Your parents may be okay with you using their sewing machine or their sander, but ask first. It's only polite.

They can also teach you how to use it properly if you've never used one before.

Be mindful of other residents!

1. If you are doing something loud, find a place or a time that won't annoy everyone else. This is especially important if you need to be noisy for a while.
2. If you are doing something that generates fumes or strange smells, make sure you do this in a well ventilated area. This is for your safety, as well as the comfort of those around you. No one wants a home smelling like paint thinner for two weeks.
3. Before claiming all of the floor or table space for cutting, make sure that people have a clear way of passage.
4. Keep common areas clean. Don't leave your crafting strewn around the house. Your life might be a mess of threads, feathers, and paint, but your parents definitely don't want that.

In other words – use common sense!



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Cosplaying with Your Parents Around

(Attending a Convention)

You're going to your first con! You've got your cosplay picked out, you've figured out which autographs you want to get, your psyched to check out the dealer's room...any then your parents tell you they are going as chaperones.

Before you get bummed out: it's not the end of the world. Trust me, I went to conventions for several years with a "chaperone" and I still had a blast.

I went to my first convention when I was 16 and my sister was 14. We'd been interested in anime for a little over a year and we were planning to cosplay. Not having been to a con before, our mother was worried about us being preyed on by "creepy guys".

At that time, there was no Facebook, no YouTube, no Instagram. We couldn't hop online to show our mom the photos and videos of con events to let her know what a fun-loving experience it could be. Even if those platforms did exist, should would have found all the articles on cosplay harassment.

My advice: don't push the issue the first time around. Let your chaperone attend and let them get comfortable with the convention. Next time, you can discuss their concerns and try to compromise, but at least they tried it once.

Cosplaying at Cons with Parent's: Do's and Don'ts

DON'T treat your chaperone like a package mule. Carry your own stuff.

DON'T assume your chaperone will be willing to stand in line for you while you do other things.

DON'T expect your chaperone to finance your con experience. Save for tickets and food.

DON'T plan on them driving / there being a car to store things. Public transport might be easier.

DON'T throw a fuss if the chaperone doesn't let you stay late or attend a rave party. Trust me, they happen every year and missing one won't hurt you.

DON'T be rude to your chaperone; if you see them in the hall or at an event, don't ignore them, don't brush them off. Be a sensible and polite person!

DO expect that they might get curious and want to sit in on panels, events etc.

DO go to all arranged meetings. Nothing freaks out a chaperone more than if you're missing.

DO keep your chaperone informed if there're is a change in plans.

DO have an awesome time!