BE who you needed
when you were younger.

Smile. When I look at you, I want to know you are happy to see me, to know I matter. I want to feel like I am the most important thing in your world at this moment.

Be consistent. I want you to be dependable, almost predictable. I want to know what you expect. I want the rules and consequences to remain constant (even when I fight them). And I never want to worry how you will react to me or my actions.

Believe in me. You might not always believe in my dreams, but know they are real to me. Let me chase them. I just might surprise you. And if it turns out you were right, at least I had the chance to try, and maybe I won't be afraid to take risks later.

Allow me to fail. I need to be able to test my wings and take chances. I need to learn it is okay to fail, especially before the stakes are too big. I want to learn to be a gracious loser and to develop the persistence to keep trying.

Make me work for things. Don't shower me with gifts or make my life too easy. I need to learn the value of hard work and responsibility. I want to learn to make good choices, with both my time and my money. I want to be grateful for the things I have. And I need to learn that helping others is the right thing to do, whether or not I receive anything in return.

Fight for what matters. Teach me how to respectfully disagree, to compromise when necessary, and to let go when the person I'm fighting against matters more.

Model healthy relationships. Show me what real love looks like. Teach me to share, to serve, to receive. Show me how to forgive. Teach me to be vulnerable. I need to know that loving someone won't always be easy. I need to see what commitment looks like.

Talk with me. Don't just talk to me. Talk with me. Ask me what I think. Share your opinions and tell me why you believe in them. Model how to reason through problems and make difficult decisions. I know you want to protect me, but if I don't learn from you, who else will I learn from?