

DAILY NEWS

Bristol Palin to guest star on ‘Secret Life of the American Teenager’ Episode to focus on teen moms

By Cristina Kinon, Daily News Staff Writer

Art will imitate life when Bristol Palin, teen mom and daughter of former vice-presidential candidate Sarah Palin, makes her acting debut on ABC Family’s “The Secret Life of the American Teenager.”

The series focuses on teenage issues, most notably teen pregnancy.

Palin, 19, will be playing herself, the network announced Tuesday.

“How did I get Bristol on the show?” executive producer Brenda Hampton told the Daily News in an e-mail. “I e-mailed her attorney, introduced myself, made the request and attached a photo of my family salmon fishing in Alaska. If I had sent a picture of me field dressing a moose, perhaps I could have gotten Bristol’s mom on the show as well. But we’re thrilled to have Bristol.”

The young Palin will befriend Amy, played by Shailene Woodley, at a music program for teen moms. The episode will be shot in Los Angeles and air this summer as part of the program’s third season.

“I am thrilled to be on this show and to be a part of a program that educates teens and young adults about the consequences of teen pregnancy,” Palin said in a statement.

“The Secret Life of the American Teenager” airs Mondays at 8 p.m.

“Bristol Palin is the most famous teenage mother in America,” said Hampton. “I think she will bring additional attention to the issues facing teen parents that we’ve been exploring for a couple of seasons now.”

“The Secret Life of the American Teenager” also stars Molly Ringwald, Mark Derwin, India Eisley, Ken Baumann and more.

Since the first episode of the first season of “Secret Life,” ABC Family has collaborated with the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy on on-air PSAs, as well as online content. They do not, however, seek the organization’s opinions on script content or casting decisions.



Bristol Palin, daughter of former vice-presidential candidate Sarah Palin, with Bristol’s son, Tripp. She will guest star on the ABC family drama ‘Secret Life of the American Teenager.’

Amy Kramer, the National Campaign’s director of entertainment media and audience strategy, reacted favorably to the Palin news Tuesday.

“I found out about Bristol being on ‘Secret Life’ the way everyone else did - reading about it this morning,” Kramer said. “We’re eager to support her and help her tell her story in whatever way that is.”

Palin, eldest daughter of the former Alaska governor and her husband, Todd, rocked her conservative mom’s vice-presidential campaign with her pregnancy announcement on the opening day of the 2008 Republican National Convention.

She gave birth to son Tripp Easton Mitchell Johnston in December 2008.

The father is Bristol’s former high school sweetheart, Levi Johnston, with whom she is no longer in a relationship. Palin has since become a spokeswoman for teen abstinence.

“Bristol gets a bad rap,” Kramer said. “People call her a hypocrite, but I don’t think she is one. She’s speaking from experience. She’s being honest. And I’m supportive of someone who knows what they’re talking about going out and talking about it.”