

SERIES G: Topic 5

Parenting

A child's primary drive is to achieve a place of importance in the family structure and gain the attention that goes along with it. If he can't earn it by constructive means, he will take it any way he can get it. This need can be so great in some children that they will take it in ways that are harmful to him and the family.

Your most powerful asset is the relationship you have with your child. Relationships are more important than issues. Children will often do more for those with whom they have a close relationship than they would for themselves.

The time between birth and 3 years of age is when children need their parents the most because that's when their programming is being established. That's when they form their opinion of how helpful or frightening the world is.

> **Children, especially young ones, need the "Three P's"—potency, permission and protection.**
>
> **Children who are listened to and whose opinions are valued tend to live with the assumption that the world will also treat them this way.**

Parents who do too much for their kids teach their children that other people exist to wait on them. This unrealistic expectation prevents children from developing their own coping skills or

taking responsibility for their actions. It sets them up for problems in relating to others for years to come.

It is not good for one child to be compared to another, no matter how good a point you think it will make. You could alienate them to each other, and that's bad for both of them.

Parents of well-behaved children avoid parents whose kids are troublemakers. Well-mannered kids also stay away from disobedient children. Your child's misbehavior limits his choices of friends to other kids with behavior problems. As your child ages, he faces more and more peer pressure. By his teenage years, you will be competing with his peers and the media for his attention; and unless your child has a strong self-image, he will likely be persuaded by his closest pals to do things he shouldn't do.

Your children's choices in the future will depend on how well you have been able get them into interesting and wholesome activities. The following is a list of some of the best ideas for developing their judgment, confidence, persistence and sense of significance:

- Have fun with them.
- Expose them to sources of inspiration.
- Take them on outings where they can see the results of others who have succeeded in doing what they are about to do.
- Describe several ways to look at various things that are happening and the most logical outcomes for each course of action, and encourage them to do the same.
- Let them see they can influence you with their good ideas.
- Show them you are just as interested in helping them enjoy life as you are in helping them assume responsibility.
- Explain to them the purpose of what you do and what you want them to do.

- Keep them away from people, experiences or media that could cause them to grow up too soon.
- Allow them to make important choices and to live with the consequences of those choices.
- Honor their good efforts on constructive endeavors, whether they succeed or fail.

The size of task a child will attempt—and whether or not he will see it through—increases if he has already been allowed to attempt tasks he might not be able to finish, and if his failures (following good efforts) have been praised.



ASK YOURSELF

What did my parents do best?

How can I show my kids examples of lives worth copying?