

HOW TO RAISE HEALTHY, WELL-ADJUSTED CHILDREN

This is a hard time for parents and for children! We have almost totally lost the extended family, and this modern age has robbed parents of many opportunities to spend time with their children (see Deuteronomy 6:4-9). We no longer have well-defined traditions for the family. There is a great deal of confusion about the role of the father! Many women have been forced to work outside the home due to economic reasons. We live at a time when there are many family experts and a lot of books available, but they are not all good! Because of the influence of Freud, Dewey and others, we have passed through a period when parents were told that most all their children's problems were the parents' fault. We were told if parents would only be more permissive, their children would grow up naturally to be good, well-adjusted adults. How wrong they were! Others thought there was an innate wisdom which told us how to rear our children. In matter of fact, experience proves that without additional learning, we will usually end up raising our children as we were raised (which may be good or bad!). It is wise to have a strategic plan for bringing up children which includes: 1) defining our mission, 2) stating the end result desired, 3) evaluating available resources, 4) establishing a plan, and 5) designing both a short range and a long range method for evaluating progress.

FOR EXAMPLE, RESEARCH SHOWS THAT YOUNG PEOPLE NEED TO:

- 1) Accept their physique and also accept a proper masculine or feminine role,
- 2) Establish positive relations with age-mates of both sexes,
- 3) Achieve emotional independence from parents and other adults,
- 4) Achieve assurance of economic independence,
- 5) Select and prepare for an occupation,
- 6) Develop intellectual skills and concepts for civic competence and good citizenship,
- 7) Desire and achieve socially responsible behavior,
- 8) Prepare for marriage and family life,

9) Build conscious values in harmony with an adequate scientific world picture.

The above come from Developmental Tasks And Education, R.J. Havighurst, U. of Chicago Press. To these I would add:

10: To know God and how life is to be lived according to His will.

11. To know Christ and His love and what He has done for human redemption, and how we are to respond in order to live with Him eternally.

12). Learn to live a life in the church in harmony with the will of God.

ADDITIONAL THINGS PARENTS SHOULD PROVIDE FOR THEIR CHILDREN:

That they feel secure and protected, that they have the necessary physical things, that they be assisted in fully developing physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually like Jesus (Luke 2:42), that they feel loved, that they be aided in learning to communicate, that they grow up having meaningful work to do by which they serve the family rather than just be served, that they receive accurate and balanced information about sex, that they be aided in developing talents and abilities, that they be raised with an imposed discipline that will lead to self-discipline, that every aspect of their life be brought under the guidance and authority of Jesus Christ, and that they be aided in learning how to eventually establish their own separate family.

THE NATURE OF DISCIPLINE:

The word discipline means "learning." However, we often think of it as meaning "punishment." There are times when punishment has an important role to play in discipline, but those who tend to think of discipline primarily as punishment will make a serious mistake. Important key passages to note are Hebrews 12:5-11, Proverbs 22:6, and Ephesians 6:1-4. Children will best learn discipline if they are part of a family all of whose members are under discipline including the parents. Undisciplined parents will usually raise undisciplined children. There should be few rules, the rules should be just and wise, they should be carefully explained, consistently enforced, infractions punished in just measure, punishment individualized to the needs of the child, giving much more emphasis to reinforcing and rewarding good conduct, and with the parents united in maintaining discipline.

IN ORDER TO HAVE A HOME THAT IS STIMULATING AND SPIRITUAL FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS:

Television and computers must be strictly controlled both for time and content, there must be full and frequent conversation, there must be work for everybody to do, all must be under discipline, home must be a place of humor, it must also be a hospitable place with the friends of your children as frequent guests, it should be a place where all are free to be themselves without violating the rights of others, it should be a place to live and not a "show place", it should be a refuge from the world, there should be good things to read and good music, families should eat together and have table conversation as often as possible, the family should take frequent trips together for education, as well as for entertainment, it should be a place of Bible study and worship, and together it should lend itself to a vital and purposeful life within the church.

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