

THE

PURPLE KANGAROO

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WORDS OF WISDOM

I am the mean mom. I am the mom that does not feel guilty when her kids have to face the consequences of their actions. Yes, I get lots of looks when my kids throw tantrums and I just walk away, but I found in my case this stops the behavior quickest. I wasn't always this tough, it took lots of ICNS training and reading to find that by coddling my children and doing everything for them, I was holding them back from thriving, gaining independence and becoming the leaders they have the potential to be.

Dr. Tim Elmore, author of more than 25 books, and founder of Growing Leaders (an organization dedicated to mentoring young people to be the leaders of tomorrow), explains how some of our well meaning parenting behaviors can actually be crippling to the growth of our children.

Here are 5 damaging parenting behaviors that keep children from becoming leaders from Dr. Tim Elmore:

1. We don't let our children experience risk

We live in a world that warns us of danger at every turn. The "safety first" preoccupation enforces our fear of losing our kids, so we do everything we can to protect them. It's our job after all, but we have insulated them from healthy risk-taking behavior and it's had an adverse effect. Psychologists in Europe have discovered that if a child doesn't play outside and is never allowed to experience a skinned knee, they frequently have phobias as adults. If parents remove risk from children's lives, we will likely experience high arrogance and low self-esteem in our growing leaders.

2. We rescue too quickly

Today's generation of young people has not developed some of the life skills kids did 30 years ago because adults swoop in and take care of problems for them. When we rescue too quickly and over-indulge our children with "assistance," we remove the need for them to navigate hardships and solve problems on their own. It's parenting for the short-term and it sorely misses the point of leadership—to equip our young people to do it without help. Sooner or later, kids get used to someone rescuing them: "If I fail or fall short, an adult will smooth things over and remove any consequences for my misconduct." When in reality, this isn't even remotely close to how the world works, and therefore it disables our kids from becoming competent adults.

3. We rave too easily

Attend a little league baseball game and you'll see that everyone is a winner. This "everyone gets a trophy" mentality might make our kids feel special, but research is now indicating this method has unintended consequences. Kids eventually observe that Mom and Dad are the only ones who think they're awesome when no one else is saying it. They begin to doubt the objectivity of their parents; it feels good in the moment, but it's not connected to reality. When we rave too easily and disregard poor behavior, children eventually learn to cheat, exaggerate and lie and to avoid difficult reality. They have not been conditioned to face it.

4. We let guilt get in the way of leading well

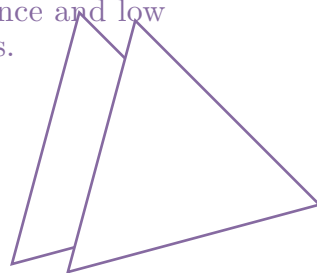
Your child does not have to love you every minute. Your kids will get over the disappointment, but they won't get over the effects of being spoiled. So tell them "no" or "not now," and let them fight for what they really value and need. As parents, we tend to give them what they want when rewarding our children, especially with multiple kids. When one does well in something, we feel it's unfair to praise and reward that one and not the other. This is unrealistic and misses an opportunity to enforce the point to our kids that success is dependent upon our own actions and good deeds.

5. We don't practice what we preach

As parents, it is our responsibility to model the life we want our children to live. To help them lead a life of character and become dependable and accountable for their words and actions. As the leaders of our homes, we can start by only speaking honest words – white lies will surface and slowly erode character. Watch yourself in the little ethical choices that others might notice, because your kids will notice too. If you don't cut corners, for example, they will know it's not acceptable for them to either. Show your kids what it means to give selflessly and joyfully by volunteering for a service project or with a community group. Leave people and places better than you found them, and your kids will take note and do the same.

I hope this article is as insightful to you as it was for me.
Happy Spring!

Evelyn Le



ASK MS. DONNA

Donna Schwartze shares her wisdom on the inner workings of the child mind and how to survive as a parent

Ms. Donna,

As parents we help shape our children's development. However, I am curious, how do children shape their own development?

Have you noticed how much the children have grown up? Not only are they taller and more mature looking, but they are demonstrating their knowledge of the bigger world and acceptable classroom behaviors. They are learning to be friends and take care of themselves along with pushing boundaries and challenging rules-which are, admittedly, very annoying but a typical and expected behavior at this age and time of year. It is always exciting in the spring to see how much the children have developed and how comfortable they are navigating a classroom situation. It often seems that they hardly need us adults in the classroom (especially the 3 day class).

I continue to hear lots of quality, probing interactions between the kids and adults. The children certainly benefit from your intentional conversations and open ended questions. Even when you leave ICNS I hope you will continue developing and supporting your child's learning and behavior management through selective language and "messages". Through your observations of, and your conversations with your child, you will make lasting emotional and cognitive connections that will help as your child begins to make decisions about his life.

A question recently asked of me was: "As parents we help shape our child's development. However, I am curious, how do children shape their own development?" I love this question, but the more I thought about how to respond, and the more people to whom I posed the question, the more complex the answer and the conversations became! It goes to the heart and dreams each parent has for his child. I believe this question can be divided into two parts: the nature vs. nurture debate of how a young child learns.

The nature of things

We all have unique fingerprints and our own set of DNA, and yet what do we do as soon as we see a new baby?-try to determine who in the family she looks like! Not only appearances, but habits-good and bad-are often blamed on one or the other parent! What's a child to do? It is very difficult to separate parent and child, or for parents to separate from their child. How-

ever each child is an individual, with specific interests, nature, and personality. A parent once asked me what he could do to make sure that his son would become a doctor! What if the child shows no aptitude or interest in science, is squeamish around blood, or has more talent in the arts? Perhaps you are a very athletic family and want that for your child who is clearly not built or inclined towards athletics, but prefers music and reading. You get the idea.

As parents we have the desire to offer our children a varied and as rich a childhood as we can provide. Parents have particular interests or hobbies that we naturally share with our children, so a parent will absolutely steer a child in a certain direction just by proximity and exposure. However, your child is not you and for many parents it is very difficult to give up the notion that their son or daughter is not going to follow in their footsteps or a chosen field.

Nurture your child

It is a parent's responsibility to shape their young children's lives. Parents must meet not only the physical but the emotional needs of their children, while providing a healthy, safe environment for their children, and imparting their family's moral and ethical code, work ethic, social consciousness, and all other family values. Children are watching: how do their parents interact and treat others? How is their parent relating to them now? Does the child feel loved and supported?

For the most part, children will do what they see their parents doing, and not what their parents tell them to do. No one is perfect. However, we all learn to overcome our weaknesses and adjust to compensate for our flaws, whether physical or emotional. Parents nurture their children by supporting their interests (even if they are different from the parent's interests) and guiding their behaviors towards socially acceptable outcomes. Aggression can be seen as negative when that emotion is used to bully others, but it is a very positive attribute when used to fight for the rights of others.

Put it all together

Parents want to see their children become successful in all aspects of their lives, and the child benefits the most when a parent uses his knowledge of his child to support and encourage his child's interests in combination with his child's innate, natural abilities. A parent's maturity and life experience, coupled with knowledge of human development and his own child, will be the most helpful in shaping a child's development.

So how does a child shape his own development?

As children separate from their parents and have more individual experiences, they gain in confidence and naturally start to make decisions about who they are and what they can do. It is a slow process and parents, for the most part, have control of their children until the age of 18, although the sphere of influence begins to wane long before this. However, the better the connection between parent and child-developed and fostered from a very young age- will give the child more support to be successful.

From conversations with many people, here is a list of skills identified that children need to shape their development. The ability to:

- Make their own decisions/think for themselves
- Foster relationships/maintain and make friendships
- Self-regulate by knowing who they are, where they are, and what they want
- Express their feelings and emotions in positive, constructive ways

We are all an accumulation of our life experiences, and how we shaped our lives and continue to shape our lives as adults is who we are today. How we were raised, our family dynamic, and our individual natures have lead us on the path we are all currently traveling. A child shapes his development based on his personality and by the lessons he's learned from parents and the adults in his life, and later, through influences from friends and his individual experiences. Everyone's journey will look and be different, but we all start with a unique nature, how we are nurtured, and the connections we make as we develop.

Happy Spring Experiences!!!

Ms Donna



25 Ways to Ask How Was School Today Without Saying, "How was school today?"

them to take?

#1. What was the best thing that happened at school today? (What was the worst thing that happened at school today?)

#13. Who would you like to play with at recess that you've never played with before?

#14. Tell me something good that happened today.

#15. What word did your teacher say most today?

#2. Tell me something that made you laugh today.

#16. What do you think you should do/learn more of at school?

#3. If you could choose who would you like to sit by in class? (Who would you NOT want to sit by in class? Why?)

#17. What do you think you should do/learn less of at school?

#4. Where is the coolest place at the school?

#18. Who in your class do you think you could be nicer to?

#5. Tell me a weird word that you heard today. (Or something weird that someone said.)

#19. Where do you play the most at recess?

#6. If I called your teacher tonight what would she tell me about you?

#20. Who is the funniest person in your class? Why is he/she so funny?

#7. How did you help somebody today?

#21. What was your favorite part of lunch?

#8. How did somebody help you today?

#22. If you got to be the teacher tomorrow what would you do?

#9. Tell me one thing that you learned today.

#23. Is there anyone in your class that needs a time out?

#10. When were you the happiest today?

#24. If you could switch seats with anyone in the class who would you trade with? Why?

#11. When were you bored today?

#25. Tell me about three different times you used your pencil today at school.

#12. If an alien spaceship came to your class and beamed up someone who would you want

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L.O.L

Our ICNS parents share some of their most hilarious parenting stories.

Breyton has always been my sensitive child. He prefers quiet games over more ram-bunctious play. After giving birth to my third baby, Breyton became very fascinated whenever I nursed the baby. He would ask a ton of questions and always wanted to watch...really really up close. One day I noticed that the house was really quiet, which isn't necessarily a good thing. I came downstairs to find my son, Breyton with my eldest daughter, Kylie on his lap.

They were playing "Family" and he was nursing his baby. He was pinching his little nipple trying to get milk to come out.

Best dramatic play ever!

Evelyn Le
(Breyton 3 day)



Once while Coco was trying to do her best to dress up like mommy she put earrings in...only she doesn't have pierced ears and she literally put my earrings INSIDE of her ears!! Both of them!

Another time my 10 year old told me her homework assignment was to write an essay on why "bowling was or wasn't a good thing to do," so I gave her many examples of why it could be considered good to do as a hobby, a way for people to meet others and feel included in a new group, it could be entertaining to do on a weekend with family, etc...she was watching me in horror as I went on until finally I said,

"I know, it's not the most popular thing to do but it's fun so who cares what people might say." That was it, she had enough, she shouted, "Mom! What kind of people would do that? To bully someone as a hobby? Just to be included in the group? I hope you are kidding!!" Lol! The entire time I thought she said "bowling" she had said "bullying"!!

Lauren Chandler
(Coco 3 day)



The Yellow Table

Recipes that feed
your soul and
your sweet tooth

Melissa's Chess Pie
Recipe courtesy of Melissa Stoldt

Ingredients

½ cup granulated sugar
½ cup brown sugar
6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and cooled
2 large eggs
2 large egg yolks
1 tablespoon yellow cornmeal
1 tablespoon cornstarch
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon salt
1 9-inch pie crust/plate chilled

Instructions

1. Adjust oven rack to lowest setting, place a foil-lined rimmed baking sheet on the rack and heat the oven to 375. Whisk all the filling ingredients together until just combined, then pour into a chilled pie crust.

2. Place the pie on the heated baking sheet and bake until the center is set and the top is golden brown, 40-45 minutes. Let the pie cool on a wire rack until the filling has set, about 2 hours. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Lemon Variation:

Substitute ½ cup fresh lemon juice for the buttermilk, omit the brown sugar, and increase the granulated sugar to 1 cup. Add 2 teaspoons grated fresh lemon zest to the filling.

Enjoy!



Chimichurri Shrimp

Recipe Courtesy of Sylvia Fountaine

Ingredients

1 lbs large raw shrimp or prawns (21-26 in a pound) peeled and deveined.
2 tsp olive oil
Chimichurri Sauce (you will use ½, save the rest-- it is enough for 2 lbs shrimp)
1 bunch Cilantro or about 1 cup packed (stems OK)
1 bunch Italian Parsley- about 1 cup packed (thin stems OK)
¼ C fresh lime juice (1-2 limes)
½ C olive oil
¼ C chopped onion
2 garlic cloves
salt ¾ tsp kosher
½ tsp smoked paprika- (optional --only if you like smokey flavor)

Instructions

1. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium high heat. Add shrimp, and saute for 5 minutes. Turn heat down to medium low.
2. In a food processor, place garlic and onion, and pulse several times until chopped. Add cilantro (stems are fine) and Italian parsley (again, thin stems are fine), pulse again. Add oil, lime juice, smoked paprika (optional) and salt.
3. Pulse until combined. Set aside in small serving bowl.
4. When shrimp are done, gently toss with ½ of the chimichurri sauce. (Trust me you will find other uses for the remainder...like on eggs, veggies or beef).
5. Serve over rice, pasta or as an appetizer with mini forks.

