

# Parenting for the future

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# Tough Questions

- How do you raise
- An employable child?
- A marriageable child?
- A child equipped for the future?
- A child who has purpose?
- A child who has a relationship with God?

# What qualities would you like to see in your child?

- A child who is
- Financially independent?
- Who has a successful career?
- Who is a good parent?
- Who is responsible?
- How do you teach this?
- What is the approach to use?
- Reality is some children are growing up to be children!

- These skills need to be taught before they are needed
- Failing to equip children with these skills before they need them sets them up for failure
- Different approaches can be used:
  - Fearful parenting
  - Passive parenting
  - "Training" parenting

# Fearful parenting

- Many parents are afraid of letting their children practice adult behaviour
- Such as finances, decision making, responsibility, social independence e.g. dating
- They keep their children isolated and at home
- However one day the child will have to leave home
- They have never made decisions or choices
- They are totally unprepared for the world

## Passive parenting

- This parent lets the child do anything and everything they want
- There's no plan or guidance on how to make proper choices
- Focus is on academic performance and if child does well they're given total freedom
- The child needs to be trained gradually on decision making
- Sometimes a child can be a "difficult" child
- Parent gives up guiding "I've tried everything and all we do is fight"

## Training parenting

- This parent uses "learners licence" approach
- Think of flying in a plane with a "trainee pilot" - No one would do it
- This parent gives child opportunities to practice
- Child practices
  - Making own decisions
  - Taking responsibility for the consequences
  - Handling money
  - Handling material things
  - Handling freedom

- There is no more apprenticeship
- Can make up for this by giving chores & duties
- Develop long term projects as teaching method
- Children learn a lot from observing parents
- How do you deal with success or failure?
- Do we let them see our struggles to succeed?
- An adult struggling with a problem sends a very strong message

- We easily let them see our successes but we hide our failures
- When they fail they'll not want to share with you because you have "no experience of failing"
- Some of the greatest innovators in the world failed terribly and for many years before they succeeded
- E.g. Alexander Bell, Henry Ford Snr, Walt Disney....
- Discuss not only academic results but also other results that they have not done well in

# Raising an employable child

- They need more than a professional degree
- They need skills for the job
- Develop positive attitudes in your children
- They need to be humble to know they don't know anything!
- They need to take responsibility for tasks
- They need to be team players
- They need to know what the work "*accountability*" means
- It all starts with chores at home

# The "ICE" plan

- I = Instruct
- This is the parents responsibility
- Clearly define what task is, how it should be done & your expectations
- C = Consequence
- Parent shares with child a consequence for both positive and negative action
- This needs to be handled carefully
- E = Experience
- Child should be given opportunity to exercise some degree of freedom
- Parents should review task and discuss with child

# Irresponsibility and excuses

- Responsible people don't give excuses
- If the job was done, they wouldn't need an excuse
- So they should accept the consequences
- Your handling of this will determine the type of individual you'll get eventually
- Don't accept excuses, give the consequence
- Teach them to accept they are at fault
- "In adult world few things are more important to conflict resolution than a willingness to admit a fault"

# First and last

- First impressions are all that most people have to go on...they'll open or close many doors
- How they talk, walk, dress gets them employed within five minutes
- Children don't care much what adults think of them
- Manners - table, social manners,
- Interesting conversation
- Firm handshake,
- Confidence, eye contact

# Decision making

- Parents make too many decisions for children
- Some children would prefer it this way
- Give them decisions to make:
- Start with simple decisions: what clothes to buy
- Move onto more difficult: How to spend an allowance
- A child who cant make simple decisions now will not be able to make tough choices later
- Freedom, start letting go now

# Respecting authority

- Parents need to teach importance of respecting authority
- And also need to teach them its okay for them to question decisions of those in authority
- Because the authority could ask them to do something that's morally wrong
- How do you respond to your child's questioning your authority? Shouting?
- Encourage them to voice their opinion respectfully

## Respecting authority cont'd

- Listen to their opinion
- Try to be understanding
- Don't be militant, parents can also be wrong
- Listen to their comments on their figures of authority
- Your child will have both good and bad bosses
- They need skills to learn what is allowed and what is not
- Teach them how to respectfully mark their boundaries with such figures of authority

# Teach responsibility towards others

- Community service
- Team building, is your family a team?  
Loyalty?
- "That's not my responsibility"
- Teach by example, what are you-parent-doing?
- Its natural not to volunteer to do extra work
- Do your children stand around and watch other people work?
- Are our children's activities centred around themselves?

# Your children's friends

- Parents are very supportive when it comes to career choices, university,
- But say little about choice of friends
- Do you know your children's friends by name?
- Teach your children values they need to look for in friends
- This should be in the form of discussions
- Your children are past the age of commanding
- Discuss qualities of a good friendship

# Communication

- Communication begins with the married couple
- Good communication results in a good marriage
- Work on getting to the level where your spouse is your best friend, is your confidant
- Start by talking about the easy things
- "Thank you, the meal was delicious"
- Then you'll gradually progress to more intimate things

## Communication cont'd

- Then work on communicating with your kids
- Most times we talk "at" them not "to" them
- Spend some quality time with each child
- Only then will you know what issues the child is grappling with
- Remember to maintain confidence, so keep their secrets
- Build relationship to point that you know what's going on in their "Personal" life..
- What is going on with their boy/girlfriends

# Handling finances

- Teach them how to handle money or it will handle them
- Lack of money sense causes great distress in many homes
- They should by now be handling larger sums of money
- You could give them an allowance
- Better if they could get holiday attachments/ jobs
- Ask them to budget for the money they earn

## Handling finances cont'd

- Again let them make most of the decisions on how to spend the money
- Be there as a guide
- But emphasise need to live within the budget
- Its better for them to make financial mistakes while they're still under your roof
- When are you going to let him handle all the finances? Hopefully before he leaves home
- What about generosity? Giving to the church or to the poor

# Teach by example

- Children will learn what they have seen at home
- If you want them to be good citizens, then be one yourself
- If you want them to be religious, then be so yourself
- Whatever quality you would like to see in your child try practice it as a family

# Your children

- Need to feel loved
- They need to be encouraged
- They need to be forgiven
- They need to know that you want the very best for them
- Will always be your children
- It doesn't matter what level of maturity they show