

Children First

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By

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“Working with education leaders to keep children first.”

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Partner With Your Child’s School

My experiences as a former teacher and school board member proved to me that the parent who was involved with the education of their child stood the best chance of getting an educated child. The effort to educate children is a collaborative process between teacher, student and parent. Each party has their own set of responsibilities.

Teachers must provide the best information and use the most applicable techniques to impart knowledge to their students. They must be interesting to listen to and truly have the welfare of their students as their primary goal.

Students have the obligation to listen attentively, study daily and commit to the learning process.

Parents are the guardians of the process. They must provide an environment at home conducive to study. They establish expectations and hold their child accountable for doing their assignments. Parents should get to know their child’s teachers and the type of learning environment provided by the school. Be supportive of strong teachers, don’t tolerate incompetence teaching your child but be able to distinguish the difference.

When teacher and student understand that parents care, everyone wins.

Discipline

To many parents, dispensing discipline to their child is one of the most difficult tasks they perform. Driving this guilt trip is the desire to “be a friend” to their children. Well, the good news is that you can still be a friend to your child and provide proper discipline at the same time. Here are a few tips to make discipline a positive event:

1. **Be consistent.** Never forget that parenting is managing and leading. In a business setting, leadership decisions must be consistent if workers are to understand the standards to which they are held. It’s no different in the home. Children need to understand the standards you expect and that can only be established when discipline is consistent. Same violation = same punishment! Consistency is best achieved when both parents discuss their expectations and then consistently enforce those expectations. There should be no surprises, no contradictions.
2. **Be clear.** No need to have a long list of rules and regulations. Keep your rules simple but very clear. Make your expectations very clear in advance of any action that might be taken by your child that is worthy of discipline. Then, going back to step one, you consistently carry out your discipline activities.

3. **Discipline in private whenever possible.** No adult likes to be admonished in front of their peers. Likewise, your child does not like to be disciplined in front of their friends, siblings or strangers. To save face, your child might even rebel when discipline is administered in this manner. Be clear and direct why discipline is applied to their actions but, let them save face. One-on-one works very well.
4. **Be reasonable and understanding.** Always make it very clear why you are administering discipline. Strive to understand why your child behaved in such a manner. Understand that in their mind, their actions make sense. By being reasonable, you reduce the potential for “flying off the handle” like a wild person. This expands the possibility of your child understanding your reasons for objecting to their behavior and changing their ways.
5. **Be flexible.** When possible, offer a win to your child. I’m not suggesting that you violate your rules just consider making them more reasonable when possible. A small win builds the potential for cooperation and less discipline problems.
6. **Encourage independence.** This may sound contradictory to what I’ve been saying. But, as your child matures, increase their decision making options. By moving responsibility to them and away from you, independence is fostered. Keep the rule in tact but now offer your child the option to discipline their own actions. You just might be surprised at the high standards they may set.
7. **Be authoritative.** Don’t let guilt, hesitancy, or indecisiveness get in the way of administering the necessary discipline. Don’t cave in to pleas for mercy when punishment is “earned.” Have the courage to follow through and trust that your common sense will ultimately prevail.

Career Choices for Children

What will I be when I grow up? It’s never too early to discuss that question with your child. There are so many career choices today that focusing on a direction can be a daunting task. To help, begin by observing the natural skills, talents and tendencies your child possesses. Then, examine career choices that would utilize these skills. For example, if a child likes science, research careers that require a science background.

There are career profiles that can be administered to further identify choices. If your child is experiencing difficulty in making a choice, have them complete such a profile. This worked very well with two of my children.

You might not agree with this point but don’t let the pursuit of money be the major criteria for a career choice. There should be an understanding of the financial remuneration of a career. But consider money the reward for effort. It is more important to work at a career that brings personal happiness than one that is chosen for dollar value.

For example, I began my professional career as a science teacher and coach—not a high finance career choice! Using the education I gained teaching, I was able to develop a better paying career using my science background. That career move opened a number of other options I had not even considered. But all utilized the use of skills I enjoyed using making these career choices enjoyable experiences.

Today, using the education I gained during my corporate career, I’m able to return to my first love—teaching. As a professional speaker and consultant, I am once again engaged in teaching albeit at a significantly different level and subject matter.

Another important point to teach your child is to not let sex bias influence their thinking. Your daughter may wish to enter a male dominated career. Today, she has that choice and a great opportunity to rise through the ranks.

Talk about your work situations with your children. Help them understand what you do. Encourage them to speak to people working in the careers they are considering. Do all you can to expose them to multiple career options. The more exposure you can offer, the better they will be able to make a decision regarding what they truly want to do when they grow up. And, always remind them that no choice need be permanent.

A Message From Leslie

As I was looking through my files for ideas to share in this newsletter, I came across these thoughts from my speaker friend, Leslie Charles. I thought you might enjoy her wisdom:

PERSPECTIVE

I don't have to know it all or do it all. I don't need to have it all or be it all.

What I do need is to know who I am, know what I want, know what makes me happy and know how to get my needs met.

If I can do that successfully, all the rest will fall into place.

Checkout Billy

Billy Arcement, MEd. is fast becoming one of the premier speakers for business meetings, educational conferences and governmental strategic planning sessions. His work helping school boards make all decisions for the benefit of children is a refreshing change from "business as usual." He also has quality messages for superintendents, school administrators, teachers and business leaders. He blends thought provoking ideas with his "Cajun Stories" to bring audiences a winning combination guaranteed to make your event a success.

His reputation as a management consultant to leaders in the business, government and education communities is growing quickly. His wisdom is making a difference.

Call us. We'd love to help! Go to <http://www.searchingforsuccess.com> to learn more about Billy's programs and services. Our results are guaranteed!

Build Your Success Library

Searching for Success is a great book for parents to use to build a strong value system within their children. The content can also help make them better students. Why not make it part of your training process with your child. Send your \$ 15.00 check now and receive a signed copy in the mail within a few days.

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