

Parental Consistency

Parenting needs to be consistent in terms of what we expect and do with our kids.

Identify values and subsequent guidelines that are important for your family. Explain these values to your kids. Be consistent with your guidance. Affirm your kids. Don't just look for faults or problems. But look for good things you can affirm in them, things that they are handling well.

Exhorting: Don't forget to challenge your kids. They need a combination of being challenged & coached as well as being loved and supported. As we know, life experience is not just about feelings. The reality is we need to work hard to be successful. Kids also need to learn order, structure, and discipline. I encourage parents to not shy away from challenges or from being assertive.

Life Decisions: For kids these days, their options and choices are endless. They can guide their life and their future in many different directions. Help them to find their direction. Let them try many things and see which ones catch on with them. This could be in creative areas as well as learning areas. Which ones strike a chord within them? Teach them to listen to their heart.

Communication: Ask them open ended questions so they have to search for the answers. Have discussions without having an anxious reaction to your kids. They are looking for someone they can talk with who will listen. Practice listening without reacting or judging or condemning. Kids and teens would love to talk to their parents but they're not able to because the parents can't handle what they're talking about because parents have too much anxiety.

Parents often need to control their reactions. When communicating, practice just listening with the goal of being supportive. Brainstorm through ideas, options, choices, and possible consequences of what they're doing or thinking of doing.

Resiliency: Through the COVID shut downs, and subsequent effects, many young people have become weaker in terms of resiliency, courage, and perseverance. Thus, all those qualities need to be rebuilt into them as they grow through the next few years. This also fits for young adults. Parental guidance, support, structure, and direction are important to help our kids grow in resiliency. Things not working out, things not going as planned, being turned down, is normal in life. Unfortunately, many of our kids have grown up in such a sheltered environment that they can't handle any kind of rejection or failure.

Life is not about what happens to us but about what we do about what happens to us. It's about how we react and respond. It's not so much what other people say or do it's about what we say or do. Help your kids grow with internal strength and fortitude. Being tested in life is a good thing! Being challenged in life is a good thing! Coping with stress and disappointment is an important life skill to learn.

Sometimes we have to let go of things we're upset about and sometimes we have to persevere and keep pushing on. Maybe the goals we are aiming for seem unattainable or

too far in the future but they're still worth striving for. We can't give up on the values that are important to us!

You can do it!

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