



Family Life Education

Children *ARE* our future.
That's not a new concept or thought.

Children *ARE OUR* future.
It's up to us, you know, the one's we call adult.

Children *ARE OUR FUTURE*.
We understand we are a powerful influence and yet;

CHILDREN ARE OUR FUTURE.
We fail to comprehend that what they see is what we get.

Deborah Cashen, CFLE, 2005

We are human and no matter how hard we try we will never be perfect. The good news is mistakes create growth opportunities. However, there is one mistake we shouldn't be making - failing to protect our children. When we think about abused children it's usually about those children who are so physically neglected and abused they are removed from their home. Unfortunately, there are other ways children are neglected and abused. Here are just a few:

- Blaming, shaming and guiltting children into behaviors that make adult lives easier.
- Humiliating children.
- Treating children as though they were miniature adults.
- Offering love and acceptance only when children do as we say.
- Expecting children to meet unrealistic expectations.
- Depriving children of developing appropriate coping skills.
- Rescuing children thereby preventing them from developing responsibility and accountability.
- Treating children disrespectfully by yelling, screaming and threatening them.
- Getting upset with children when they display the very behaviors we model for them.

We all understand that physically neglecting and abusing children causes irreparable damage, but how often do we think about what we do to our children psychologically and emotionally? When we fail to teach children the life skills they need to successfully transition into adulthood, we are setting them up for failure. As in most forms of child abuse, this form of abuse can be prevented.

Contrary to popular belief, we are not born with good parenting skills. Those skills don't come naturally. Some of us may be fortunate enough to have those skills modeled by our own parents. Even so, it's tough to battle today's outside influences. Parent education is continuing education. It comes in many forms – books, internet searches, classes, workshops, lunch and learn seminars, and coaching. What could we possibly invest our time and money in that gives as great a return?

Good parenting is an acquired skill. To develop any skill requires education and training. Take a proactive step to prevent the damage that results from well intended, but unprepared parenting. Don't wait until your children are out of control to call in a super nanny. Seek continuing education through your place of worship, your children's school, or your workplace if they provide those services.

THOSE WHO INVEST IN PARENT EDUCATION ARE GOOD PARENTS.