



Parenting You Are the Role-Model

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Children learn from those around them.

What are you saying?

Do you tend to use threats with your children that everyone, including you, knows that you will never act upon? Saying things like "I will never bring you to the store again" will not, in the long term, be taken seriously by your child and will certainly, over time, erode any respect for you that you'd hope to receive.

Raising your voice on a regular basis will likely cause fear when first heard but may eventually result in others tuning you out while you go hoarse.

Are you using the same foul language that you would punish children for using?

Making idle threats, yelling and swearing are ineffective ways of trying to motivate children. They usually garner negative responses and frankly just make you seem to be the most immature person in the room. If you don't believe me, try looking into a mirror during one of your temper tantrums. I think you will be surprised at what you see.

What are you doing?

"Do as I say and not as I do" has never been a good way to discourage children from making poor choices. Parents who smoke, tell lies or bully others shouldn't be surprised when their children do the same thing.

Are you working with the school to ensure that your child has the best opportunities to learn or are you sending a message that you are rather apathetic - at least until there is a problem?

Do you claim that you have a strong faith in God and then drop your child off at Sunday School while you slip home for a nap? Your child will soon want to skip church too, especially if you make a habit of missing the celebration services on Thanksgiving and at Easter and Christmas.

What are you allowing?

Are you giving your child permission to drive without a license? Do you support or encourage underage drinking by turning a blind eye or even purchasing alcohol for your child? Do you set out rules that are not tied to consequences?

One night, when I was speaking at the Medicine Hat College a woman in the audience said "I figure that if my kids aren't upset with me, then I'm not doing my job!" Interesting perspective!

There are two types of parents. The "good" parents are the ones that children really like because they never say "no" and give the children everything they want - even if it isn't good for them. "Responsible" parents, on the other hand, make choices and set boundaries to protect the children and help them to do well in life. They might not be as popular but

their goal is not to be a permissive "friend" to the child. Instead they choose the harder road that demands wisdom and consistency.

Parenting is very hard work and much more than just ensuring that your child is fed and clothed. What you say, do and allow are extremely important. Remember, you are probably one of the most powerful role-models that the child will have throughout his/her life. Make sure that you set a good example!