

SECRETS OF PARENTING

What's the Risk?

Can't we just let children grow up on their own? As long as they don't bother me, they are good kids.

My children just watch TV and don't bother me. I hardly even know they are there.

What are you risking if you don't pay attention to the way you get along with your child?

What risks are you taking if you simply do not know enough about children's development? Can you unintentionally hurt your child's esteem, emotional development, or learning ability?

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Read the questions below and select the parenting response that you prefer. Then see if your choices match effective parenting practices.

- 1. If you are having a bad day and yell at your children for no reason,**
 - a. you should never apologize so your children don't view you as weak.
 - b. you believe children should learn to stay out of their parents' way.
 - c. you should apologize for yelling so your children will have a good model to follow.
- 2. Rules are made so children**
 - a. will learn how they are supposed to act and behave at home and in school.
 - b. will follow them without questioning them.
 - c. will learn who is boss.
- 3. Young children are self-centered, which means**
 - a. they need everything they see.
 - b. they cannot yet understand how you feel and think only of themselves.
 - c. they whine a lot.
- 4. Children require reminders of HOW to do things. If this is true, then**
 - a. parents should remind them only once.
 - b. children should listen the first time.
 - c. parents will have to remind them again and again.
- 5. Children learn most of what they know from**
 - a. television.
 - b. other children they play with.
 - c. adult role models.

6. **In general, teenagers prefer to get advice from**
- their families (mom and dad in particular).
 - their peers.
 - their teachers.
7. **A trusted adult such as a parent will not always be around, so children need to follow**
- the advice of other children.
 - an inner voice that helps to guide them.
 - rules that other adults spell out to them.
8. **Examples of routines and rituals that make family life meaningful are**
- family mealtimes and birthday celebrations.
 - vacuuming the car.
 - the first day of kindergarten.
9. **Giving a child all he or she wants, including gifts and privileges, may**
- make the child happy.
 - make the child just want more and more.
 - make the child well-behaved.
10. **The most effective way to keep teenagers safe is to**
- monitor the places they go and whom they are with.
 - keep them at home.
 - put off letting them get a driver's license.
11. **Children need to understand that they are valued and have a purpose to**
- motivate them.
 - open their minds to learning.
 - feel a sense of purpose for school and living.
 - all of the above.

Key: The following responses reflect effective parenting practices. Do your responses to the questions match these?

1-c, 2-a, 3-b, 4-c, 5-c, 6-a, 7-b, 8-a, 9-b, 10-a, 11-d

Most parents find that they need help with these parenting challenges. The North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service provides free publications that can help:

Parent Involvement: Parents Are a Child's First Teacher (FCS-511W)

Parenting and Parenthood (FCS-477)

Guide for Discipline, Part I (FCS-455)

Guide for Discipline, Part II (FCS-456)

Self-Esteem in Children (FCS-506W)

These and other publications are available from your county Extension Center, or they can be viewed online at the following Web site:

<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs/humandev/pubs/>

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