



Mistakes Parents Make

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Our aim as parents boils down to loving and effective parent-child relationships and communication that creates respect and self-discipline, no matter the generation.

Speaking from a parent/grandparent point of view, none of us gets it all right, but there are some mistakes we can avoid along the way and I would like to share some of those with you in this article. We prepare the path by wanting them not to fail; we project our lives onto them; we prioritise their happiness; we're inconsistent; we remove consequences; we lie about their potential; we don't let them struggle; we give them what they should earn; we praise the wrong things; we remove their pain and we do it for them.

We won't let our kids fail: “None of us wants them to fail, but if we remove their failure mode, they lose their ambition to excel. Don't confuse hurt with harm” (Proverbs 22:6).

We project our lives through our children: “We want our children to live our lives through them by pushing them into what we want them to be”. We should find our own identity and not burden our children with ours (Romans 3:10-12).

We prioritise being happy: “We make children believe that happiness is their goal”. Happiness is found when the focus is off ourselves and helping others. We are to give them direction. Let Jesus's life be the example for them to model. “Love the Lord our God with all our heart and love our neighbour as ourselves (Matthew 22:37-40).



We are inconsistent: “We confuse our children in that they don't know which version of us to follow”. Is it the one who says or the one who does? Inconsistencies breed insecurities. Let us model the standard we want, and they will follow (Hebrews 13:8).

We remove the consequences: “There are always consequences for our actions, the longer we delay implementing them the bigger they get”. By allowing our children to face the natural consequences for their action, helps them make better choices in the future, (if they are not disastrous), so let us parent for the long term (Ephesians 6:4).

We lie about their potential: The early years is all about their giftedness, and value, but as they get older and they accomplish a task well, we exaggerate their achievement, which causes them to hold a distorted view of themselves. It begins with me!

In later life, maybe in a job situation where they may have missed out on a promotion, they become deflated because they were not affirmed in their true potential. “This may cause some young people to experience clinical depression because they had high expectations of themselves in less gifted areas”. Affirm them in their gifts and watch them bloom in a healthy way (Ephesians 4:14-16).

We won't let them struggle: We are like helicopter parents, constantly hovering, waiting to land. "It's the experiences, good and bad, that make us who we are today. It's the struggles that help a butterfly break out of its cocoon" (James 1:2-8).

Don't give them what they should earn: Instead of allowing our children to work for what they want, we give in and hand it to them on a plate. Even if you have the means, it is good practice to let them earn it as it helps them to be more appreciative and satisfied from having done so. (2 Thessalonians. 3:10)

We praise the wrong things: Scripture doesn't tell us to praise our children every day but it does say about exhort or encouraging others. (Hebrews 3:13). For example, just because a child clean up the mess they made in the home shouldn't call for praise but thanks and acknowledgement, but if on the other hand, they use their initiative and help out without being asked when the need arises, they can be affirmed for their effort, taking into consideration the way they performed the task and their attitude, rather than affirming their smartness or beauty which is out of their control". Let our affirmation encourage them in meaningful ways. (Proverbs 25:11)

These mistakes mentioned above, shows the parent preparing the path for the child instead of the child for the path. Proverbs 22:6 says to start them in the way they should go and not get everything set up perfectly for them to succeed, and when they are old they will thank you for it.

Psalms 23 highlights our heavenly parent. The Lord is our Shepherd, guide, leader, comforter, preparer, company in dark places, anointer and one who loves for a lifetime. If your child wrote a psalm about you, how would you want it to read?

Read Psalm 23 with your child and ask how it makes them feel about God as a parent, then share with them your desire to parent more like Him".

(Based on Tim Elmore's 12 Huge Mistakes Parents Can Avoid)
