

How can I launch my kid into young adulthood.

When considering parenting a child, teen or emerging adult; there is one common goal we all have. That is, that they would be able to manage life well as a young adult. We'd like our young adult to be able to navigate society, decisions, social pressures, work stress and their own personal relationships well. Right?

How can they learn to do this?

What parenting strategies would be best have that would lead to a confident, self-controlled, wise young adult?

The main parenting skill that I think of is teaching your kid to listen to his own heart and mind. We may think they don't know anything and that we need to input all necessary information in their brains in order for them to know how to function well in life. But I believe in reality, by the time they are 10 years old, they already know all of their parents values and opinions. They learn these by watching and observing and not from what we say. Yes, our words matter but not as much as our actions.

As the familiar expression goes; 'they learn from what we do and not from what we say.'

However, most of the time, as parents, we think, we have to express a particular value or belief. Also, that this needs to be repeated over and over throughout their time living with us. As I mentioned earlier, a 10 year old can tell you what your answer or belief or reaction would be to anything happening in life. Well almost anything. You can test by asking them, what do they think you would say about this or that?

If this is true (and it is), then that puts a lot of responsibility on us to observe our own actions. This includes behaviors such as; managing anger and frustration, working through conflicts, accepting responsibility for our mistakes, caring about what the experience is like for our spouse/partner/other parent that is or isn't living with us, and even our drug and alcohol usage.

Kids, teens and young adults are searching for authenticity and genuineness. These qualities have been disappearing over recent years. Gen Z, which is the current teen generation, seeks to find people who care about others, who are real and who act to make culture better. They actually believe they can make a difference! How wonderful! They aren't cynical and pessimistic. They are also a joy to be with also because of their openness and honesty and heartfelt intentions.

So what we need to do is allow our kids to make decisions for themselves, learn from their decisions and seek to apply what they have learned from their experience. I am not saying let your kids do whatever they want to. But I am saying to spend more time helping them think through choices, options, potential consequences, pros and cons of decisions. This is instead of telling them what to do. Again, they already know your view point. Allow them the freedom to think and act. These parenting strategies will grow character qualities such as integrity, being trustworthy, self-confidence, assertiveness and some wisdom from their limited experience as they are launched into young adulthood.

Thank you for being there for your kids! You are making a difference in a positive direction!

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