

Display Authority, Feed Values, Prescribe Rules, Hide Vice

I dislike how parents generally act around their kids. They play a role, they have written an approved script, and they hope for everyone to play along. Some of this is due to poor information (or poorly understood information) and some of it is purely to display authority and power over their children.

We are a role model to our children and we teach them our values. This is generally accepted as true, and even though it is probably not as true as most people think, we will roll with it. Unfortunately, parents don't see this as an opportunity to welcome their children into the world, show them how they think, and discover the underlying ideas and principles that inspire action ... most parents see this fact as evidence of the need to display authority, feed children culturally approved values, prescribe culturally approved rules for child behavior, hide vices and portray an all knowing attitude of how the world works.

This is all counter productive, alienating and full of shit. Children, over time, see through this facade as merely rule pushing busybodies who wish to shelter them from reality ... and they are right. It's cute watching a show like South Park, which has made a genre of humor out of the disparity of what children actually know and desire to know vs. what the parents think kids should know.

I don't mean to say parents shouldn't be leaders, they should. However, a leader ought not be a rule pusher. A leader can be an inspiring person who helps people attain their desires and introduces them to accurate information and interesting thoughts about reality. A leader doesn't have to portray himself as all knowing, as the decider of things, or the authority of others. A leader is best when he is an inspirational teammate who knows how to have patience and empathy.

Cuss words often offer a perfect example of the disparity of a parent being a rule pusher vs. a parent being a good leader. Cuss words are a reality of our culture. They exist to spice up sentences and all children will hear them. The leader introduces the child to these cuss words, discusses proper contexts, helps the child integrate a greater understanding, and uses the opportunity to connect with their child as they learn about culture language and reality. The rule pusher shelters their children from the words, and punishes them for repeating them. The rule pusher then tries to shove this script onto all other people who can be within earshot of the child. They are distorting reality and sheltering their kids in order to push a sensitized version of reality that they deem their children are able to handle.

This isn't just in cuss words, of course. Most people never escape the poorly constructed version of how to raise children, few people understand how to lead, few people know how to analyze the parenting information fed to them by their cultural influences, and few people are able to relinquish total power over their kids. Most parents become rule pushers that rule over their kids ... and this feeds into all aspects of their parenting.