

"EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT RAISING KIDS..."

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By Terry L. Sumerlin

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While it's not entirely true that "everything I need to know about raising kids I learned behind a barber chair," it is true that I've learned some things.

I was reminded of these things, after hearing a sad statement from a conscientious dad. He said that he and his son are now on different paths. I asked how old his son is. "Twelve," he answered. I thought of how close I am to Jon, our 22-year-old son, and how it would hurt me to think we were "on different paths" when he was twelve.

But, I also thought of the many kids who come through our doors and of the many parents who seem to be getting it right. Thus, I've developed sort of a "Barber-osophy for Raising Good Kids." Here are a few such "Barber-osophies":

1. Be in charge. It doesn't seem possible that a 4-year-old child can control a 40-year-old parent. However, I've seen it happen, and it makes you wonder who is the child and who is the parent. It also makes you wonder if child abuse doesn't sometimes take the form of a parent who won't take charge.
2. Reduce the choices. While this is relative, depending on the age of the child, it seems that children who always have a choice regarding such things as treats and privileges tend to be ungrateful, unhappy and undisciplined. Sometimes it might be more appropriate if the choices are reduced to something I read on a friend's refrigerator: "This ain't Burger King. You take it my way or you don't get it at all."
3. Be careful about showcasing the child. There are far too many kids who receive no positive attention from anyone. There seems to be a growing number of parents, however, who make every interaction between their child and themselves a public event, a look-at-me-and/or-my-child situation. Thus, the child begins to think that the world revolves around him (her).

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4. Expect the best. Parents who expect the first haircut to be "a piece of cake" are often rewarded. Similarly, by our words and actions we must always let our kids know we believe in them and expect the best from them. It propels them toward success.

BARBER–OSOPHY: Though there are no perfect parents or perfect children, it's easy to spot the parents who are genuinely trying to get it right.

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Raising Happy Diabetic Kids Part III Help Your Child Develop Self–Control

By Russell Turner

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This is the third and final article in a series I wrote about raising happy diabetic kids. While Juvenile Diabetes makes this job tougher the information in these articles applies to raising any child. Diabetic children aren't any different from other children. Their pancreas just doesn't work. However, the emotional toll that diabetes takes on a child, even when blood glucose levels are under fairly good control, must be taken into account whenever we consider what is best for them. We can be very helpful in raising children who are emotionally strong and better able to avoid and overcome these stresses brought on by diabetes by making sure they are raised with a strong foundation of these three basic life skills. Self–Confidence, Self–Reliance, and Self–Control.

It All Starts With Discipline:

In order for our children to develop self–control it is our responsibility to teach them discipline. Discipline is the part of raising our children that causes us the most sleeplessness. It's probably also the part that a lot of parents don't think they get quite right. The thoughts of the "experts" have changed so much that the "old fashioned" discipline we were taught and what has become the so–called "permissive" new tradition are so far apart several things generally happen. We ignore what we were taught, or we ignore the new conventional wisdom, or we become confused and don't carry out our responsibilities properly. I'm as guilty of this confusion from time to time as anybody else is. When you think about it discipline should have three goals.

It must pave the way for our children to acquire Self-Control or self-discipline.

It must be applied in such a way as to allow our children to also develop self–confidence and self–reliance.

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Parents must be comfortable with implementing it and feel it works.

The old fashioned "thou shalt not" style discipline and the new permissive style lead to two completely different outcomes in children. With the old fashioned style we end up with children who don't learn to make choices or decisions well for themselves. They find acceptance only if they "do as they are told" and it teaches them in turn to exert power and control over others. On the other hand with a permissive style of discipline our children have too many choices and never know where they really stand. This can lead to insecurity. (and low self-esteem) Our children get used to having their own way and they learn to negotiate and manipulate. We only step in when the behavior goes too far. It always goes too far, they're kids.

How To Develop Self-Control:

By raising our children within a framework of proper discipline we encourage self-control in them. We aren't going to be the boss forever. We are teaching our children to be responsible for themselves.

There are three main components to Self-Control. They are habit (hanging up their coat when they come in or doing homework before watching TV), seeing the greater good (doing without something right now in order to get something better later), and the ability to make moral judgments (doing things

just because it's the right thing to do). We need to teach our children to think ahead about the consequences of their actions. They should also be taught to accept responsibility for what they do. They need to be taught to make proper rules and to stick to them.

Our kids need to learn to accept disappointment. And also to trust their own judgment. When children learn to see what needs to be done, stick with it until it is done, and not do it just because someone told them to or because they know it will make us happy, then we can pat ourselves on the back.

This is our goal in teaching our children good diabetes control. It will help them realize not only that they have to do it but that they should do it. We as parents of diabetic children have been entrusted with a very difficult and special task. By holding up our end of the responsibility for helping our children develop self-confidence, self-reliance, and self-control, we are preparing them to grow into adults that number one can and will take proper care of their health. And will in turn raise the next generation of happy kids, our grandchildren.

Russell Turner is the father of a 10 year old Type 1 diabetic daughter. After diagnosis he found all kinds of medical information about diabetes on the internet. What he couldn't find was information about how to prepare his child and family to live with this disease. He started a website for parents of newly diagnosed diabetic children <http://mychildhasdiabetes.com>

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