



Living With Children

By John Rosemond

Copyright 2017, John K. Rosemond

One of the “secrets” to a happy, healthy emotional life is to identify one’s bad, nonproductive habits and replace them with habits – slowly built – that are functional. That same principle is of the essence when it comes to a parenting life that is satisfying.

Most parents who want to do a good job but feel frustrated in the attempt are making a finite number of mistakes – ten, to be exact. If a parent who is making these common mistakes eliminates and replaces them with behavior that works.

Arguably the Number One Biggest Parenting Mistake is explaining oneself to one’s kids, giving them reasons and explanations for parental decisions as if a parental decision isn’t valid and can’t be put into practice unless the child in question approves. Explanations also assume that parent and child are peers and that the parent’s authority in any given situa-

tion is open to negotiation. Of course, it goes without saying that the “negotiations” in question aren’t constructive dialogues; they’re debates that often devolve into yelling, threatening, and guilt. Can you say, “Because I said so”? Those much maligned four words simply affirm that the parent’s authority is authentic, and let me assure the reader that a parent who would give up his seat in a lifeboat to save his child possesses unassailable authority over said child.

Number Two is striving for blissful relationship with one’s child. A parent’s job is to provide leadership. When relationship is the priority, effective leadership is impossible. Why? Because leaders must be willing to make unpopular decisions. Can you say, “Well, Billy, I am sorry to have to tell you that I really don’t care what you think or how you feel about any decision I make, or me for that matter, and the sooner you accept that, the better for you.” Relationship is the result of proper leadership. Put it first and you will be forever gnashing your teeth over disciplinary matters.

Number Three is giving children lots of choices. Again, mental health professionals don’t know what they are doing as regards children. It’s quite simple: children do not know what they truly need; they only know what they want; therefore, their choices are generally

bad. They don’t need practice making decisions; they need parents who make good decisions for them. Eventually, if said parents stay the course, their kids will figure it out and thank them for it.

Number Four, implied in Numbers One, Two, and Three, is believing that people with capital letters after their names know what they’re talking about. A fellow asked me, “Do you think psychologists and people in the mental health community in general have said anything worthwhile?” No, I don’t. That’s right, nothing, zero, nada, zilch. Their foundational premises concerning children and parental responsibilities are a mess. When one’s premises are faulty, one’s recommendations will be faulty as well. It’s certainly an ironic thing for me to say, but if parents – mothers, especially – would boycott all parenting books, children would be much better off. Well, not ALL parenting books.

Earlier in this article, I identified giving children explanations for parental instructions, giving children lots of choices, putting wonderful relationship with one’s kids at the top of one’s parenting priorities, and thinking the “experts” know what they’re talking about.

Let’s begin with what is probably the single most absurd bit of advice mental health and child development specialists have ever snatched out of thin air: to wit, when an adult addresses a young child, the adult should “get down to the child’s level.” Supposedly, talking to a child from a fully upright position is intimidating and sure to bring on a psychological apocalypse of one sort or another. Where do these people come up with this ridiculous stuff, anyway?

The position in question – I call it the “sycophant squat” – is clearly subservient and communicates to a child that you are pleading. In fact, since vocal quality tends to match body language, there is great likelihood that you will indeed sound as if you’re begging, as in, “It would really help Mommy out, Little Bubba, if you would pick up these toys and put them away. Will you do that for Mommy, okay?”

As I often say, the key to getting a child to do as you tell him to do is not proper consequences (albeit consequences can play an important role at times), but rather a proper presentation. Children obey people who look and act confident in their authority; they do not obey sycophants. And by the way, the research is as clear as can be that the more obedient a child, the happier the child. Parents have a responsibility to ensure obedi-

THE WICKER REPORT

By: United States Senator Roger Wicker



Wicker’s JROTC Act provides new opportunities

High school cadets more likely to graduate, attend college

The experience of serving in Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (JROTC) programs can have real benefits. A Rand Corporation study found that students who participate in JROTC have higher grades, better attendance rates, and are more likely to graduate from high school than other students.

I introduced legislation in 2018 to expand the availability of JROTC programs to more high schools across the country. The JROTC Opportunities for Transformational Change Act of 2018 authorized funding and reforms to add 100 new units at schools in rural and underserved areas. The bill was included in the defense authorization act and became law with President Trump’s signature. Two years later, this law is continuing to expand opportunities for communities and young people.

I am pleased to report that last year’s defense bill built on my 2018 proposal by setting a minimum requirement of 3,700 units nationwide in 10 years. Achieving this baseline will add 188 more units than exist today. Each

of these new programs will provide young leaders lessons about service, character, and citizenship while encouraging better health and wellness.

Success of Mississippi Cadets Inspires Positive Change

Mississippi is a prime example of the impact a JROTC unit can have on a community. In fact, it was the success of students enrolled in JROTC programs in our state capital that originally inspired me to introduce legislation to expand these programs to other schools. The Jackson Public School system, a district facing significant challenges, includes seven schools that host JROTC units. Across these schools in 2018, 90 percent of graduating seniors who participated in JROTC were accepted to an institution of higher learning and received more than \$7.5 million in scholarship offers.

Outcomes clearly are better for students who participate in these programs, but more programs are needed. Before my legislation, (Continued on page 9.)

ence on the part of their kids and the sycophant squat is not consistent with that responsibility.

While I’m on the subject of communicating authority properly, I must mention the currently ubiquitous habit of parents ending instructions with “okay?” When that is the case, the instruction is no longer an instruction; rather, it is a suggestion and a suggestion that sounds whining to boot. Today’s parents are not having more problems with child obedience that their great-grandparents even thought possible because the oppositional-defiant mutation entered the gene pool forty years ago. They are having said problems because they are – not all of them, of course, but entirely too many – acting like wimps in front of their kids. In many parent-child situations, there is no adult in the room!

Yet another common contemporary parenting mistake is using consequences (when they are needed) that mean nothing. A mother recently told me her five-year-old daughter hauled off and hit her in a fit of pique. What did mom do? She put the little narcissist in time-out for five minutes! Wow!

“Are you ready?” I asked. “For what?”

“For her to hit you again. You’ve taught her that if she hits you, you will do essentially nothing.”

She asked what I recommended if it happens again. I told her to confine her daughter to her very nice and comfortable room for a month during which she can enjoy parole to eat with the family, do chores, go to church and school and accompany the family outside the home. She also goes to bed immediately after supper, seven days a week. No birthday parties, sleepovers, or sports. The operative principle: If a consequence does not establish a permanent memory, it’s been a waste of time and effort.

“A month! You’ve got to be kidding, John! She’s only five!” protests a reader or ten.

Right. And she has a very nice room. In fact, confined to her room, said five-year-old will have a better month than at least half of the world’s children. One thing is certain: At age seventy, she will remember being in her room for a month when she was five. She will also remember that she never hit her mother again.

Family psychologist John Rosemond: johnrosemond.com, parentguru.com.

CASH PLUS TITLE PLUS

205 Tchula St., Lexington, MS
(across from Double Quick)
662-834-9045

Payday Loans up to \$400.00
Title Loans up to \$2,500.00

**WE DO 30 DAY LOANS!!!
NO Credit Check**

Refer a friend, earn a free \$20.00!

ATTENTION HOLMES COUNTIANS LOGISTIC & ACCURACY TESTING

You, the citizens of Holmes County, are invited to attend the Logistic and Accuracy Testing a/k/a (L & A) for all voting equipment to be used in the upcoming March 10, 2020 Primary Election. L & A Testing will be March 2 thru March 4, 2020.

The Mississippi State Law requires a Logistic and Accuracy Testing at least five (5) days before an election on all voting equipment.

The Logistic and Accuracy Test provides certification of the accuracy of the Voting System along with the opportunity to discover any issues that may exist with the voting equipment. Logistic and Accuracy Test will be performed on all Accu Vote-TSX and Accu Vote-OS Units, the GEMS Server, and GEMS Election Database to ensure that:

- Each voting unit is fully functional and free from mechanical problems.
- Results are tabulated properly
- Results are uploaded accurately
- Each voting unit contains correct ballot styles

For additional information, please call
The Circuit Clerk’s Office
662-834-1957