

## Parenting-an art to be learnt forever

In the lives of children, parents play an important role. Parents are the models for the children. Research studies conducted worldwide revealed that children observe and learn from the parents and parenting has a great effect on the personalities of the children. The life on earth is mechanized, the social institution called family and its dynamics have changed a lot, children of this era need dynamic skills altogether to with stand in the competitive world. The parenting tips which we learnt earlier lost their reliability. We are now forced to learn new parenting tips to bring up our children and I believe we need to continuously learn the art forever.

Children of this era have to be dynamic to distinguish themselves from others. This is a very competitive world. According to me, the following are some of the aspects in which children have to be exposed to better their lives.

- Emotions
- Personality
- Soft Skills
- Values
- Intelligence
- Creativity
- Relationships
- Autonomy
- Physical Health
- Extra curricular activities such as Sports/Games, Dance and etc.
- Finance Management and House hold works (Cooking, Washing and Cleaning)

Otherwise the children will get struck in the near future. For example see



The child is very intelligent and so says to his father that he has to become Billionaire but what about the values? There was less development in Values of the child. It is worth nothing.

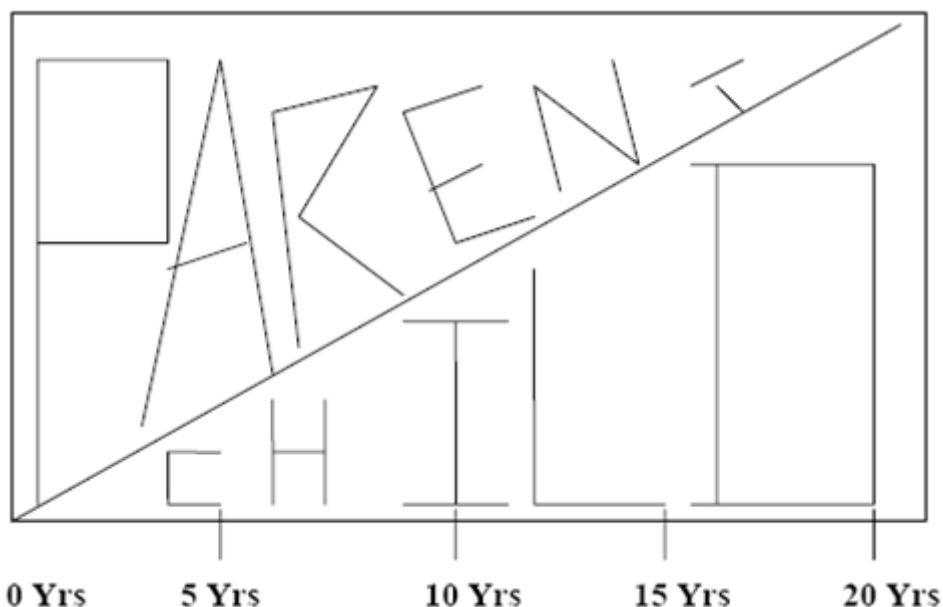
Prevention is better than cure. Better, we need to prevent the children from getting into problems such as depression, lack of anger management, failing to bounce back to normal life after aversive situations such as love failure and failure in exams. All the organizations hire the individuals who have overall development, just think how many challenges they need to face before getting a good job. They check the decision making and problem solving abilities.

The children are like flowers. The various aspects of children are like petals of the flower. If some petals are over developed and some are poorly developed, will that be called as a beautiful flower? The need of the hour is “Overall development”.

Asking children to concentrate on many things simultaneously gives a hectic schedule which would again hinder the overall development. Kindly remember “Too much of anything is good for nothing”. They are not adults to handle everything simultaneously. Even adults find it difficult to be so. Scientifically speaking, their brains are too small to perform such things simultaneously. It is natural and normal that parents expect their children to perform well in everything but it is not possible to all the children.

In the counseling sessions, when parents compare their child with somebody else, I am tempted to ask them, “If your partner compares you with someone else, how much painful it would be?” I want parents to understand the pain of children when they are being compared.

Often times we think that parents bring up the children. The fact is that we forget is ‘after some time children grow themselves’. Parents are mere spectators and take pride in their development. The below chart shows the role of parents in the lives of children from pre-birth till 20 years of age.



After 20 years of age, parents have very minimum role to play. Parents need to keep increasing choices to them till 20 years and then they choose for themselves. If this is not followed, the children may lack in their decision making skills.

0-5 Yrs- Choice of Parents

6-10 Yrs-2 Choices

11-15 Yrs -3 Choices

16-20 Yrs - 4 Choices

21 onward- Choices of Children.

I ask this question to the parents who bring their children for counseling, “Just think about your parents, do you follow the parenting styles that your parents followed? I am sure you are influenced so much by your parents’ parenting styles. How was your experience as a child during your childhood and adolescence? “

**Courtesy:** Mrs. Arundati Swamy, Student & Family Counselor, Chennai & Dr. Jeyanthini, Child Psychiatrist, Chennai.