

Kroppl

NEWSLETTER

PARENTING AND PEER PRESSURE

We all want our children to have strong values and morals. When they are small we read them stories and tell them about people with good morals in the hopes they'll pick these morals up.

However, our children's first taste of what the world looks like is their parents. They learn how to interact with people, how people will interact with them and what to expect from their parents. No matter what advice or rules parents may give their children, the contribution that they make to the person they grow up to be is minimal compared to what they absorb from the people around them. It is important therefore to always live the morals and values you want your child to have.

As they grow older and their circle expands to include teachers, peers and friends they also become part of your child's 'circle of influence'. This is where issues of peer pressure both negative and positive start to become a problem. As parents, guiding your child to overcome these difficulties themselves is integral for their future.

It's normal to worry that your child is being influenced too much by their peers, or that they're compromising on their values (or yours) to fit in with their friends. It's also normal to worry that your child won't be able to say no if they get pressure to try risky things, like skipping school or smoking. But listening to the same music and dressing in the same way as friends doesn't necessarily mean that your child will also do antisocial or risky things.

If your child is happy with who they are and their choices and values, they're less likely to be influenced by other people. Your child might choose to do some things that their friends do, but not others. And your influence is important here - it's the biggest factor shaping your child's values and long-term choice.

Confidence can help teenagers resist negative peer influence, confident teenagers can make safe, informed decisions and avoid people and situations that aren't right for them. You can build your child's confidence by encouraging them to try new things that give them a chance of success, and to keep trying even when things are hard. Praising your child for trying hard is important for building confidence too. You can also be a role model for confidence, and show your child how to act confident as the first step towards feeling confident.

Academic stress was once a regular phenomenon in India, parenting was one of the factors that contributed to it the most. Expectations of parents in India stand as one of the major causes of academic stress, it also leads to devastating consequences such as student suicides and adjustment problems in children.

It is noteworthy that educating a child is also stressful for parents. Because they want their kids to stay happy and secure in life. And this makes them concerned about their child's performance around the year. While this might be hard to digest, sometimes the best thing we can do for our children is allow failure. It will be a learning experience for their future on how to deal with it as adults. It will also reduce the stress they feel to please you and they will study for themselves instead of because of fear which is a far greater motivator.

There are only two lasting bequests we can hope to give our children. One of these is roots, the other, wings.

-Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

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Here's an exercise you can do with your child to help them draw boundaries
(let them make these themselves and only help them if necessary)

Values I can
compromise on

Eg. Loyalty: If a friend treats me badly I will not continue to endure that behaviour

Values I will not
compromise on

Eg. Drugs: No matter what pressure my friends might apply I will not do drugs