

Being a parent to young children and/or growing teenagers, is a difficult and stressful job. Most parents say they are unprepared for what lies in store and just hope that things turn out for the best. But, with a little thinking and planning, you can do a lot towards making parenting a rewarding and happy experience for you; and in turn be doing something really positive for your children.

Parenting “traps” can add to the stress many parents experience and make the job of raising children much harder than it needs to be. One of the traps may be thinking “it’s all their fault” . This belief places blame for problems and misbehavior totally on the child, such as “she’s so naughty and stubborn” or “he never does as he’s told”. This may make parents resentful and lead them to overreact to poor behavior. It may also stop parents from looking at how their own actions contribute to problem child behavior. How much of what your child does – in his or her behavior – is learnt from someone they know?

Another common trap is for parents to see their child’s bad behavior as simply a ‘passing phase’ and expect that he/she will grow out of it. Problem behaviour needs to be dealt with early so it does not turn into a more serious problem later on. Thinking that your child will grow out of a problem behaviour may prevent you from finding out why the problem is occurring, looking for solutions to the problem; and then making changes or seeking help. And it’s good to remember that help is available!

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