PARENTING MYTHS
by Kenneth West, Ph.D.

MYTH 1: Parenting should come naturally
TRUTH 1: Parenting education helps everyone.

MYTH 2: Good children never misbehave.
TRUTH 2: Good children must misbehave.
Avoid the belief: "It's just a stage."

MYTH 3: Good parents should never lose their temper.
TRUTH 3: Share Your Feelings.
Avoid the belief: "My children can handle all of my feelings."

MYTH 4: All children need is love.
TRUTH 4: Children need encouragement.

MYTH 5: Parents can never do too much for their children.
TRUTH 5: Never do for a child what he/she can do.

MYTH 6: Spare the rod and spoil the child.
TRUTH 6: The best discipline allows children to experience the consequences of misbehavior.
Avoid the belief: Natural and logical consequences will remove all misbehavior

MYTH 7: "There will be no fighting in this house."
TRUTH 7: Fighting is inevitable, plan for it.
Remember to establish the rules and consequences for unacceptable behaviors.
"Parents must establish a plan to handle disagreements."

MYTH 8: My child(ren) never listens until I start yelling.
TRUTH 8: Children's misbehavior always has a goal.
Children generally have at least one of the following four goals:
1. Getting attention. 2. Power 3. Revenge
4. Assumed disability - Typical of children who have been severely discouraged, they tend to give up.
Remember: Not all misbehavior is directed at the parents.
MYTH 9: Never impose your values on your children.
TRUTH 9: Parents need to teach and model family values.

Don't be afraid to share your most treasured beliefs.

MYTH 10: Boys will be boys.
TRUTH 10: Boys can be much more.

"We live in a society where no one - not women, not men and not children - can "have it all" anymore. But through joint effort and commitment - families can work together so that everyone can reach reasonable personal goals.

MYTH 11: Children are more like adults in their thinking than their feelings.
TRUTH 11: "Children are more like us in their feelings than in their thinking."

Respect for a child's feelings does not imply they should be sheltered from stressful events or feelings. Trying to protect children from difficulties prevents them the opportunity to grow and learn.

MYTH 12: Always strive to be the best.
TRUTH 12: Display the courage to be imperfect.

Do not parade imperfections around though as if they were virtues.

MYTH 13: Children should be paid for doing chores.
TRUTH 13: Chores help children to feel needed and to learn personal responsibility.

MYTH 14: The most important love is parental love.
TRUTH 14: The most important love is marital love.

If you take time for your marriage, your children will be the beneficiaries.

MYTH 15: When the going gets tough, the tough get going.
TRUTH 15: No, you cannot have it this way forever - CHANGE!