

# 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 children 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.

*.b. 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!

EXCERPTS FROM: West, Kenneth Ph.D. (1990) 21 Deadly Myths of Parenting & 21 Creative Alternatives. Tulsa, OK: Council Oak Books.