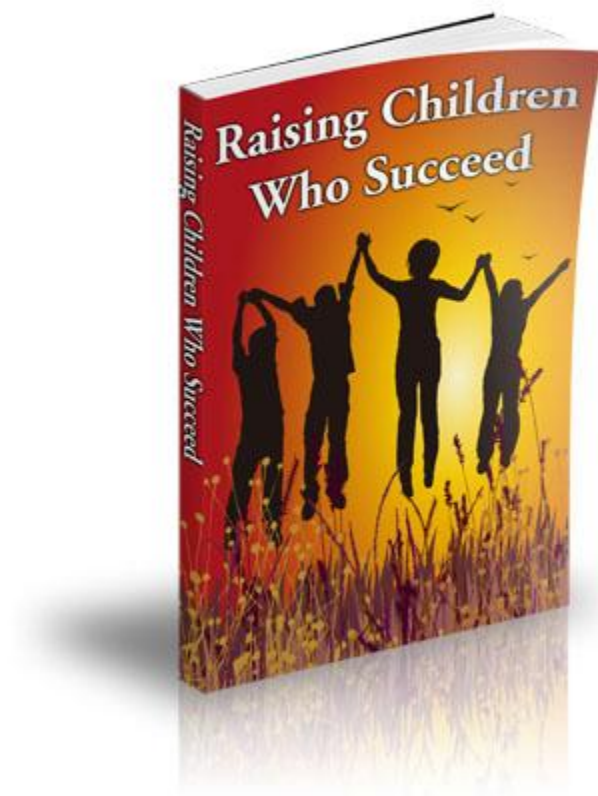


Raising Children Who Succeed!



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Raising Children Who Succeed

It is one of the most powerful things any person alive can do, to choose to raise a child. Whether he or she is a genetically related child or one you have gained from another family, a child is a life long commitment. It's worse than a puppy!

There is a well known saying that to have a child is to wear your heart forever outside your body. TO some extent that is true. Think teenage angst was bad? It's nothing on the first time you have to deal with your own child's heartbreak!

With our busy lives it is so easy to become geared up to making sure our children have all the essentials covered, such as food, shelter, learning to read and write, and all those important jobs done, that we forget that so much of what our children need us for is for us to impart a spark of desire in them to succeed, to become all they were made to be.

It's the drive of many parents to watch their child surpass them in their life in some way. Whether it is with a talent, a discovered passion, or their standard of living, children should be able to combine what they learn from our mistakes, and our life lessons with the lessons and opportunities they themselves face and collate them together to succeed.

To have a successful child we need to create a childhood that breeds success. The best part about this is it doesn't cost you thousands of dollars in private school fees or in plenty of extra curricular activities. In fact with just a little time, some listening and a whole lot of talking you can beat those things in most part hands down.

Helping a child succeed in today's world is a little different than it was a few generations ago. Back then, it was considered wise to teach your child to become a salary and wage earner, working in a stable job from the moment they left school until retirement.

Success was measured by how long you stayed in the same job. Consistency and stability were the favoured attributes.

Then it was all about working your way up, about starting out in the business, any business and working your way up to the top, not worrying about whose toes you may step on on the way.

More recently things have changed. The more recent generations coming out of school accept they will probably have at least four to five career changes over the course of their life. They know how to flaunt their talents and sell themselves and aren't too scared to do it.

These kids, the ones who succeed today, are good at finding the gaps in the market and driving towards them. They'll walk from a job that doesn't offer them a good mix of lifestyle opportunities, perks and career advancement. They often prefer to work to contract than be tied to a permanent position. Security and consistency aren't words in their employment vocabulary.

This is important to understand as you look at raising your own children. This current generation seeking employment may have different attributes than the one your child will be in, but it's likely to be more in line with how it will be than the generations of your parents and of yourself.

Our children today are growing up with a very different world view than the one we once had. They want to be self employed, own their own businesses, and pursue creative endeavors. While of course some children still veer to traditional roles, the majority of children feel attracted to roles that were previously seen as just for those creative types. Even jobs in IT can be incredibly interactive and creative, and children in our technological ages are attracted to them

How Do We Define Success?

Of course simply said, our child is a success if they grow to be healthy, happy and able to be independent of us. However for most of us, while we say that is all we want for our children, it's not all we expect from them

Take a moment to look at your own life/ How do you measure your own success? Is it through the type of possessions you own, the work you do, the way you live your life? Is it your relationships, your children? Think about what you feel is a success in your life and write them down.

The amazing thing about parenting is that we teach our children even when we don't mean to. So that list of your own successes are important. It gives you a starting point of what your child is already learning from you about what is important in your life, and they will follow it.

Once you have created your lists read over it once more and think about how you learnt those elements of success. Put them into groups – emotional, spiritual, and physical and economics. This report will help look at all of these as a group, but it's important to consider them individually to begin with.

We all have different areas that we consider are the most important to measure our success in. For some finding one person to spend the rest of your life with, raising children together, maybe the pinnacle of your success. For another it maybe growing a business and becoming the CEO of a world wide organization, and for another it may be working with a group of people who need the services of someone committing a lifetime of free work alongside them. All of these are important. All of them add to the world we live in.

TO create a successful child, we need first to recognize that success isn't just about being the richest child on the block. It's about awakening the inert dreams and hopes each one of our children hold inside their heart and bringing them to life. If we do this, then our children will succeed.

While our children will copy us, and follow us, they are not carbon copies of us. Even if you've come from a long line of doctors, and you yourself are one, it doesn't mean your daughter is going to be the same. Once we have worked out how WE measure success and what values we want to share with our children through our modeling of those measures, we then need to acknowledge they are a separate person from us, and still may go a completely different route.

The precise nature of how they show their success isn't as important as how they carry out any task before them. The skills we need to run an NGO in a third world country are very similar to those of running a business or a home. It's just placing them in a different context.

To succeed children need to be able to work with a wide range of people (have good people management and leadership skills), to be able to identify a problem and then also have an idea of how they can go about solving it. This combination is a winning success formula suitable to a variety of ways your child may display their success.

Children need our expectations and our ability to call out of them positive attributes, but they don't need us to carve out a specific future for them. They are able, even at a young age to do that themselves.

What Don't Children Need

Whatever the planned end result of your child's success, all children start with the same needs and wants. Essentially it's the same plan to create the most successful life.

The best and most powerful thing to realize is that you can't stuff it up with one mistake. Non of us are perfect, so you are going to make mistakes You'll lose your temper, forget to watch a game, say no to something deeply important. Funnily enough it's as much our own mistakes in parenting as our successes that can contribute to our children's success. Our mistakes can give our children a point of comparison.

Most children who grow to be hugely successful had often almost dysfunctional upbringings. They may have lost a parent early on, lived in near poverty or just never fitted into school. There are many external factors that occur to our children that we have no control over. And these things, instead of being a negative influence, can turn around and become part of what creates success for them. Perfection is not required.

Luxury is also not a necessary part of your child's success. Children who grow up in luxurious surrounds with all their physical needs met don't develop the hunger they need to g out and make it on their own. They have no need to- to all intents and purposes they've already got it.

Some very wealthy people choose to raise their children very humbly and simply to encourage them to create their own path to success.

If we provide our children with everything they need, and everything they want, they have no reason to solve the problem of how to get what they want. If you are familiar with the story of Charlie and the Chocolate factory, the characters of each

child besides Charlie are of parents who love their children through indulgence.

If we have a lot it feels natural to give to our children. However the best gift we can impart is the gift of developing their own resourcefulness. It's a little bit more of a long term thing, but it's a powerful gift to give.

This is great news for those parents amongst us who worry about how a lack of finances can negatively impact their child. It doesn't need to. The saying necessity is the mother of invention is certainly true when it comes to our children developing creative and inquiring minds.

CASE STUDY

Megan has three children. Last year she was earning a lot of money and it really was easy to let her children take lots of lessons after school in ballet, drama and French. They pretty much we allowed to do what they want. Their wardrobes were filled with designer clothes, and the toys were everywhere.

Megan's children weren't spoiled in behavior but they were very blasé about looking after their possessions as it all felt a little easy come, easy goes. But Megan persevered.

Around four months ago Megan lost several large contracts and suddenly had more time to spend with the children, but also discovered it wasn't so easy to just go out and buy things with the children, or fill their after school time with activities

Much to her surprise her children didn't complain. In fact they said they enjoyed the time they have now more. They have become experts at finding free or very cheap activities to do together as a family that are often educational and inspiring. Her eldest child, though a little too young to work, has begun to display strong entrepreneurial skills after Megan explained that

the extra money for treats had to come from somewhere, and that somewhere wasn't going to be her own bank balance.

Megan's discovered that not giving her children everything can sometimes be one of the most important gifts you can pass onto your child.

What They Do Need

The path to our children's success begins right at the start. Our children are not born as an empty vessel, waiting to be filled. Each one already has some innate talents, a personality that will develop and grow. If you have more than one child, you'll know how amazing it is to watch both children grow up in the same environment but grow so differently, and respond to different things.

While our child is not an empty vessel, they are a little like a sponge, absorbing both the good and bad that comes their way. It's our job to create an environment that gives them a strong foundation to build their success from.

Of course each and every one of us can think of one famous, extraordinarily success person who can from such horror and heartbreak that we look at that and see that only people with a tortured home life have the ability to succeed. But for every story of horror, there are far more people who succeed from happy, settled and sorted homes- their stories just don't make quite as good a read!

To start the foundations right, all children need an environment of good boundaries, routines, rules and responsibility. These words are often bandied about but the following is a basic rundown of how these work to created success.

BOUNDARIES

These are not hard fences, but are rather the universal laws governing your home. The first boundary has to be love, and is best started from birth. Your child's understanding of unconditional love, that you'll be there for them no matter what begins here. If this boundary is well established everything else is easier. You need to attend to your baby's needs, as they occur, and learn to read the personality of your baby and adapt your parenting to suit. One baby may be best suited to being held for long periods of time, born touch hungry, while another one prefers to have time alone in their cot. Each child needs to be parented differently.

After love, comes consequences. Focus on natural consequences, such as tidying up a mess they've made themselves, paying for the window they broke, or apologizing face to face for a wrong they've committed. This has to be age appropriate (young children may sometimes only clean up a portion of the mess, and you help with the rest), and it needs to be consistent. Every one is allowed to have a rough day where you just sort it out yourself, but it's good to keep going with the boundaries you've created. The chief boundaries basically boil down to three important precepts: Respect for self, respect for others, and respect for things.

Creating good boundaries is important. As an adult we sometimes make conscious decisions to enlarge our boundaries, to allow people to walk over us a little, or sometimes we do the same to them, particularly in business. But well established boundaries help in all areas of our life from relationships to business. They help us to avoid addiction, and build positive, strong and effective relationships with others- all of which add to our success.

CHALLENGE: Spend some time looking at the boundaries, the natural boundaries you have today. These are often our physical environment, our state of fitness and finances, and time to list a few. See how these all naturally curtail us and create boundaries? Of course for huge success to happen most of us need to step outside these boundaries at some point, and walk almost by faith, but this works best if we first know where the boundaries lie, and which ones are more important (those that are relationship based for example) than others.

ROUTINES

For some routines adds a certain gleam to the eye, while for others cultivating routines send you into the realm of panic attacks.

While some like to run a home with military precision, the most positive way to create routine is out of need, rather than a quest for perfection. Perfection creates stress and anxiety.

We want a happy, full home for our children instead. A home with children in it shouldn't be immaculate all hours of the day-children thrive best in a slightly unkempt and creative atmosphere. If you've spent more time in the last week cleaning than interacting with your children, you may need to renegotiate how you are allocating your time.

Routines cater to a child's most basic needs: for food, sleep, shelter, health and sense of self. When looking at these, you can see why it's important to add routines for mealtimes, bedtimes, and bath times and time with you or alone. It doesn't need to be regimented to the minute, though it is probably a good idea for both you and your child if some things are. For example, select several types of food for breakfast, and your child can choose amongst those every day, rather than have a new and improved breakfast every morning. Set a bed time, and stick to it.

The best thing about routines is not about the sticking to them black and blue, day in and day out part. The best thing is when you decide to trust your child to a non routine moment. A child LOVES the occasional late night far more if they know it's secretly past their bedtime. Kids love getting pancakes on a Sunday as it means it's a different day to the rest of the week when all they had was toast or cornflakes. If everyday is a haphazard day they don't have anything to center themselves on, and treats get all mixed into the chaos.

CHALLENGE: Set some routines in place- and let them suit both you and your children. Sit down with them to explain any changes and then introduce them. If you are not used to giving your children routines, do expect some resistance (can feel like a lot!) and just remember to be consistent and calm while making sure those new routines get established. Some children will adjust easier; others will take up to three weeks to adjust. If it's a good routine (such as a regular bedtime) you may be surprised at how fast you begin to see some huge payoffs for your decision.

RULES

All rules stem from the boundaries we've created. There doesn't need to be a lot of these, in fact it's easier to keep them as simple and as consistent as possible. Develop rules that both develop a good sense of respect for self, others and things, and develops responsibility

Most of us work better if we have a little carrot in front of us. It may be money, or time off, or the longer term payoff of a better relationship. These are the things that drive us.

Rules are far more likely to be adhered to if children can see the payoff for doing so. Work out consequences for rules not being adhered to and stick to them firmly right from the start. If your child is consistently bucking the system, look at the rules. Does

your child perceive its fair? Are they confused as one day you make them stick to the rules and the next day you don't? Keep it simple, keep it consistent. Sit down and work out the basic rules of your home. These can be quite broad, and relate back to the boundaries.

They may be as follows:

Our house is a place where we talk to each other with respectful and pleasant voices.

Our house is a place where ours and other people's belongings are cared for and we put them away when they are not in use.

Our home needs a lot of work to make it run, and it's everyone's job to help at their own level to help it get there.

The focus on rules is to keep them positive and broad, and simple, and then let your little rules spring from these. These rules closely reflect your own values.

CHALLENGE: What rules do you already have in your home? Are they currently being enforced? If not, why not? Is it because they are far too many, far too complicated? Or is it that you yourself can't see the reason for them?

Write down the rules in your home. Take a look at them. Are these rules that will contribute to your child's future success? Tweak the rules until they are both something you are happy to enforce if necessary, and they will positively improve your child's chance at success.

RESPONSIBILITY

In the Western world we often now raise our children to be little princes and princesses. We want them to be children, to play and have fun. If we do take away the fun, it's normally to replace it instead with extra curricular activities such as after school French, tennis or ballet. While of course all of these have a place, and teach us important skills, it's often at the cost of a more important lesson – of learning responsibility.

When we get busy and find ourselves running from activity to activity, we also often move into the “I'll do it, it's easier” mode. We get them dress, we pack their bags, we make the breakfast, or we half do their homework.

Sometimes it's good to reality check just how much you are doing for your child, and therefore preventing them to grow into their own independence by looking at children in developing countries. They are often expected to clean the house, cook the dinner, and walk long distances for water- right from a very young age.

While it's not perhaps the best to advocate taking your child on as a maid, it is good to make sure they have jobs and a role in your family. This is their training ground. Once used to it, they'll thrive on feeling responsible.

CHALLENGE: Identify what your child is currently responsible for. Ask yourself if it is age appropriate, and if it needs challenging. Are they contributing to the running of the household? A three year old can fill the recycling bin, a five year old can clean up their toys, an eight year old can make a salad for dinner, a teen should be able to do your weeks' shopping of required.

Our children will want to succeed if they feel its all part of being on team. Build a sense of you all working together towards the

common goal of a happy and healthy family. Children want to be involved- it's a natural and healthy inclination.

The Legacy of Books

One of the most powerful tools in creating a child aiming for success is to create a hunger to learn. This can be done with just a regular visit to your local library. Make it a must have activity for your week, getting out a mix of both non fiction and fiction books for them to read.

During the week engage them and discover what they are currently interested in and help them find books on that topic to investigate further.

Schools do a great job in teaching our children, but successful children have parents who invest time in helping feed the big “why” and “how” questions a teacher of a large group may not get to. Learning to out resource the answer to the big questions is a wise move on your part and helps the child to learn skills once again in sourcing out their own information.

Once they are old enough, Google of course is a wonderful search engine, but surround yourself with books first and you’ll be setting up a life long journey of self education and success.

Helicopters and cottonwool

CASE STUDY

When Alison took her daughter to a birthday party recently, she was quite the centre of attention. Earlier on in the day, her daughter Michelle had fallen while on a bike ride and she'd grazed her knees rather badly. Michelle had put large sticking plasters on the knees.

Both children and adults were fascinated at the sight of the bandages on the knees, commenting that while it was something all kids seemed to go through a generation or so ago, that it was rare to see kids with bumped knees or broken arms anymore. Alison was at first embarrassed and then realized she was lucky: she had a child who was exploring as she had as a child and experiencing a bit of independence other children weren't enjoying.

A helicopter parent is one who hovers around their child in case their child fails, or to ensure they are on their best behavior. They are the type of parent who brings in the most amazing science projects, done mainly by the adults in the house.

Helicopter parents prevent their children from seeing what they can do themselves, learning to enjoy their own independence because they are doing everything for them instead.

A cottonwool kid can be the by product of a helicopter parent or just a product of busyness. These are children who have everything done for them, often because it's easier for the parents to get ready to leave the house or get to work on time. Cottonwool kids can't develop the resourcefulness a child needs to succeed as they become too scared to try anything new.

Children are more likely to be successful if they are confident at initiating ideas, and happy in a wide range of situations.

Children also learn with their bodies. They need plenty of opportunities to discover the natural boundaries of earth (Gravity is a good one!) before coming to grips with the more ethereal boundaries. They need to learn the limits of their own risk taking. This is not a carte blanche suggestion to throw your child in a shopping cart and push him down a steep hill, but rather let kids be kids. Let them climb trees, run, jump, and fall without feeling we have to watch them do it all the time.

The Power of Role Models

When we have children, we assume they will be just like us. They'll share the same drive and passion, and they'll act like us in every situation. The problem is genetics is far more complicated than that. They may end up with having the same personality as difficult Aunt Maud who owned seventeen cats and used to hiss at dogs on the street. Ok maybe not THAT bad, but close enough.

We can teach our own children an awful lot about live and success, but one of the true sanity savers for parents is to discover you really don't need to do it alone.

Find people around you that have similar interests as your children and encourage them to connect. You may not have a single artistic bone in your body, but your child loves to draw. Find a babysitter that is also at design school for them to talk with before bedtimes on your going out evenings. Get their aunt or grandmother to take them to an exhibition if it's more their thing than yours.

This has several benefits. First it's teaching your child that they can resource people to meet their needs. They learn that there are other people out there who feel the same way as them.

It also helps them to take their interests deeper and see if it is something they feel is worth progressing.

CASE STUDY

Simon wanted to be a designer. Problem was neither his mother nor father were in the slightest way artistic and didn't really know how to help him besides taking him to the odd class. Simon's mother Maggie heard of an old friend who was working in design and arranged for Simon to spend a day with

him. Simon came home from the day exhausted but happy and has since started working for the man one day after school in his studio. He's learning and motivated, and on the way to success.

To be honest, most successful adults are no accidents. It's the collected work of parenting, education and time that creates someone who wants to make the best of themselves.

One of the best flow on effects of wanting to have a successful child is you learn along the way too. And should you become a little more successful as well? Well that's got to be good...right?

Teaching Social Skills

It used to be that the most important attribute we were meant to have was our IQ. It was something we were born with, though of course a good education and a positive home environment does also affect IQ scores.

More recently people have looked at Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences and started to value all the different ways people can be clever. A mathematician may be fantastic with numbers for example but not great at writing a literary essay, or vice versa.

It's very important to give our children a wide range of opportunities to discover what they are good at early on so they can decide what they want to focus on. However one thing no one can really get away with anymore is having poor social skills.

Of course some of us are better than others at being good with people. If you've got a wee chatterbox who finds it easy to smile at strangers, and interact with others, then you're sorted. However all children need to learn to interact with people, so they can use this skill later on in life.

If you've got a shy child it's still important they learn skills in communicating. Talk to them about overcoming fears, embracing fear and using it. Even children as young as five and six can understand this. If you've been nervous speaking in public, share your own experiences.

Never force your child into a situation where they feel unsafe, but offer to share it with them. Refuse to be curtailed by their fears however. If you are naturally exuberant and cheerful, let your child see the way you interact with others, rather than you

opting to stay at home because new social settings makes your child nervous.

Use a wide range of tools to help your child become more confident with others. You can role play with toys, and teddy bears, or make a conscious effort to invite friends over. Interact with other parents, and get your child into situations where they already enjoy themselves and feel relaxed such as a soccer team, or a drama class.

Teach them manners and help them learn tools to self manage difficult situations. Talking to an adult for most children can really be a last point of call.

CASE STUDY

Mary had two children who she would often take out with her as she worked. As they sometimes needed to be unsupervised while she walked into a meeting she taught them several tools to ensure world war three wasn't erupting by the time she got back.

First she ensured they had all their basic needs met, such as food, drink and something to do. Then she talked to them about how to deal with any disagreements in her absence. The two children were taught how to apologise and ask for forgiveness, and then have that forgiveness accepted if a disagreement arose. She was only to be interrupted if the person refused to accept the forgiveness for the wrong.

In the vast majority of times she was not interrupted and people to this day still comment on how beautifully behaved her children are to each other and the people around them.

Money, Money, Money

Giving your child a good education in money is one of the key preparatory steps to success.

Start small. Give your children money to as part of their contribution to the team of task contributors in your home. You can also give them pocket money that has no jobs attached to it as well if you like.

Encourage your child to use the money after it has accrued a little rather than blowing it every time on lollies. Even if you can afford it, don't buy them everything they want. Give toys and DVDs and games as rewards for hard work, or get them to work towards them by earning extra money with you.

If you are self employed or a wage earner yourself and you find your child wants to do a lot of activities or have a lot of things, explain the time it take to earn that particular thing. Give them the option of more hours away from them for you to earn the money, or more time with them. Children find it an interesting decision and they will often make a different choice each time.

The earlier you can teach your child to make money away from a salary or wage earning method the better. Talk to your children about passive income and provide them was ways to learn about how they can earn it. While many children are not officially allowed to register for online money making plans such as registering for click bank, or online selling, they can do it through you.

Also consider other methods of earning for your child. If they are creative, they may want to design jewellery or something similar. There have been children as young as thirteen who have patented cool inventions, or become the chief designer of their own fashion label. That's a definite sign of success!

