

Constructing A Parenting Strategy

Assuming that your mission is to glorify God in all you do and to pass the baton of faith on to the next generation, what would be 10 practical elements of a parenting strategy for accomplishing that mission? Develop your strategy with the assistance of the following research:

- The Search Institute (Minneapolis) surveys every year thousands of middle school and high school students across the USA. They have identified differences between kids who break the law, have problems at school, or get involved with drugs with similar kids who do not get into trouble. The basis of these differences is seen in *assets* (positive influences, both external & internal) and *deficits* (influences & characteristics that interfere with healthy development, leading to risky behavior). The more assets a young person has, the less likely he or she will be to get into trouble. Parents are the main contributors of assets in a child's life. The following material is adapted from *The Troubled Journey: A Portrait of 6th-12th Grade Youth* by Peter L. Benson (Search Institute, 1993):

ASSETS

- Family support: families that give love & encouragement.
- Parent support: kids view parents as people available to give advice and support.
- Parent communication: kids have frequent, in-depth conversations with parent(s).
- Parent involvement in schooling: parents want to help their kids do well in school.
- Positive school climate: schools give a caring, encouraging environment.
- Parents set standards for appropriate behavior.
- Parents discipline when a rule is violated.
- Parents monitor where the kids are going and with whom they will be.
- Kids are home four or more nights.

DEFICITS

- Being at home for two or more hours per day without an adult present.
- Watching television three or more hours per day.
- Putting a lot of importance on hedonistic, self-serving values.
- Feeling under stress or pressure most or all of the time.
- Experiencing at least one incident of physical abuse from an adult.
- Having had at least one incident of sexual abuse.
- Having a parent who has a serious problem with alcohol or drugs.
- Feeling a consistent lack of care, support, and understanding.
- Having close friends who use drugs and/or have trouble at school.

➡ Greg Johnson & Mike Yorkey wrote a book called Faithful Parents, Faithful Kids. As a part of their research they asked adults what had contributed to their faith remaining intact into their adult years. Their responses can help us in forming a parenting strategy:

1. Conversational prayer was often heard in our home.
2. I always saw Mom and Dad reading their Bibles.
3. My parents taught us how to spend daily time with God.
4. We had easy access to Christian books and magazines.
5. Sunday School attendance was a must.
6. We always had family devotions.
7. I made a profession of faith early in life.
8. What really helped was belonging to a great youth group during the teen years.
9. Every summer, I went to a Christian camp.
10. Other adults had a direct influence in pointing me toward Christ.

Please list below 10 practical elements of a parenting strategy based upon the research given above:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____