

mr. mark's CLASSROOM

Shaping a Child's Life

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Coaching Your Kids in Life

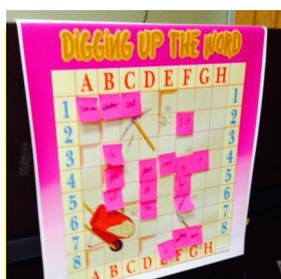
You and I have both heard, "Children are so impressionable." Maybe you have even said that, but do you act on it? My wife Connie and I were told as young parents that our son at age five would act the same at age 15. We were shocked! Zac was four and Wes was two and we felt like we had already failed. These boys cried and threw fits and it seemed we battled about everything. Does this mean we will always do battle? I am happy to report they turned out okay. Their wife and fiancée' played a big part in that too.



Learning how to respond to your child is often the most difficult thing to do. The "tough love" guy seems to be ready to lay down the law and the "gushy lovey" parent just wants to love away any issues like a Hall-mark commercial. One of these approaches might fit you but really, a wide range of responses are needed. Your child doesn't need a drill sergeant barking orders or a helicopter parent swooping in the rescue them from danger. Your child needs a coach. Someone to explain the game(s). Someone to tell them to try again, take another lap and review the plays of life situations. Often parents are so consumed with their own life and responsibilities that coaching moments are not an option. So the family members move to their separate places and manage their endless supply of media all under one roof.

So first, choose more family time to be together. Set yourself up for success! Second, begin coaching your kids as their spiritual mentor. Be purposeful, intentional, thoughtful and biblical in what you say and do. Even if you're the tough love parent, every problem doesn't need to be hammered like it's a nail. On the other hand, every problem doesn't call for a hug with gushy love. Invite God to be active in your personal life so you can operate out His wisdom and patience. Let your answers sound like, "The Bible tells us to...", "We need to pray for...", or other words that demonstrate your trust in God. Coaching your kids to reason and think is always better than punishment alone. We all live by making choices, good and bad. Your coaching will give your child the platform to see the difference and want the best. Our children are impressionable and you are making the moments count as you lead your children to Jesus.

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