**Parenting**

**Adolescence is a period of rapid changes. Between the ages of 12 and 17, for example, a parent ages as much as 20 years. (Changing Times, The Kiplinger Magazine)**

**Rearing children is like holding a very wet bar of soap -- too firm a grasp and it shoots from your hand, too loose a grasp and it slides away. A gentle but firm grasp keeps it in your control. (Elaine Hannagan, in Reader's Digest)**

**A perfect parent is a person with excellent child-rearing theories and no actual children. *(Dave Barry)***

**The best inheritance a parent can give to his children is a few minutes of his time each day. (O. A. Battista)**

**We never know the love of the parent until we become parents ourselves. (Henry Ward Beecher)**

**A parent knows success when his child turns out better than he did. (President Joe Biden)**

**There are two things in this life for which we are never fully prepared: twins. (Josh Billings)**

**My daughter Carrie got into drugs. In that situation, don't be their best friend. When we got her into a third rehab, oh, she hated my guts! You have to love them enough to let them hate you. She got sober before her 18th birthday, and we had a good 20 years -- we were joined at the hip for a time there. Carrie died of cancer at 38. But in the hospital she said: "Every day I wake up and decide, today I'm going to love my life." And that was her mantra. (Carol Burnett, in AARP - The Magazine / Real Possibilities)**

**Wife says to husband: “Let's try getting up every night at 2:00 a.m. to feed the cat. If we enjoy doing that, then we can talk about having a baby.” *(Randy Glasbergen cartoon)***

**First man: “What’s it like having a kid?” Second man: “It’s different. You go from thinking that you’re the center of the universe . . . to knowing that your child is.” (Tom Batiuk, in Funky Winkerbean comic strip)**

**If I could change one thing about the first 17 years of parenting, I would have laughed more with the kids. I would have been less of a proper parent and more of a funny parent. When I messed up most, it wasn't when I was gone. It was when I was there but I had no sense of humor. *(Mary Loverde, in Stop Screaming at the Microwave!)***

**Our children give us the opportunity to become the parents we always wish we had. *(Quoted by Nancy Samalin in Love and Anger: The Parental Dilemma)***

**Parents are not interested in justice. They’re interested in peace and quiet. (Bill Cosby)**

**The total cost of raising a child from birth to age 17 is $222,360 for middle-income parents, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. That’s 22 percent higher than the 1960 cost, adjusted for inflation. (Los Angeles Times, as it appeared in The Week magazine, July 2-9, 20l0)**

**If you’ve never been hated by your child, you’ve never been a parent. (Bette Davis)**

**Until you become a parent, you can’t begin to discover your capacity for strength, love and fatigue. (Peter Gallagher, in In Style)**

**I was attending a community-education course on effective parenting. Ways of dealing with children's behavior were discussed. At the last class, the instructor asked a very frazzled-looking mother of two, “Have any of these methods helped you handle your kids better?" “No,” the woman responded. “But they've worked wonders on my husband!” (Lynn G. Keinath, in Reader's Digest)**

**Perhaps parents would enjoy their children more if they stopped to realize that the film of childhood can never be run through for a second showing. (Evelyn Nown)**

**Americans once expected parents to raise their children in accordance with the dominant cultured messages. Today they are expected to raise their children in opposition to them. Once the chorus of cultural values was full of ministers, teachers, neighbors, leaders. They demanded more conformity, but offered more support. Now the messengers are violent cartoon characters, rappers and celebrities selling sneakers. Parents are considered "responsible" only if they are successful in their resistance. That's what makes child-raising harder. It's not just that American families have less time with their kids; it's that we have to spend more of this time doing battle with our own culture. (Ellen Goodman, in Boston Globe)**

**Fact: As a parent, you can do nothing to guarantee your child will never make a certain bad choice. Fact: Therefore, when a child makes a bad choice, it isn't necessarily because of bad parenting. Fact: Good parenting is doing the right thing when a child does the wrong thing. Fact: To do the right thing when a child does the wrong thing requires clear thinking. Fact: You cannot think clearly if you believe your child's bad choice is because of bad parenting -- that it's your fault, in other words. Fact: When your child makes a bad choice, your child needs correcting, not you. Fact: When your child does the wrong thing, you can think clearly and do the right thing by keeping all of the above facts in mind and saying to yourself, "My child's bad decision is his fault, not mine." (John Rosemond, in Teen-Proofing: A Revolutionary Approach to Fostering Responsible Decision Making in Your Teenager)**

**Having a child is like falling in love for the first time when you're twelve, but every day. (Mike Myers, actor and father of two)**

**Who comforts them each time they cry? Mama! Who keeps them healthy, clean and dry? Mama! She soothes the knee they skin at play, and feeds them many times a day. So what’s the first word they say? Dada! (Submitted by Mrs. Mary Ann Baumann)**

**Murphy, a 31-year-old childless bald eagle at the World Bird Sanctuary in Valley Park, Missouri, was trying to hatch a rock for weeks thinking it was an egg – male bald eagles sometimes incubate their young. So when the sanctuary took in an injured orphaned baby eaglet this month, he became the ideal candidate to become a foster parent. The keepers introduced the chick, named “Eaglet 23-126,” into Murphy’s enclosure, and after a few days of getting to know each other, Murphy’s paternal drive was in full display. He answered the bird’s peeps and even tore a whole fish for him to eat. Murphy, said Dawn Griffard, the sanctuary’s chief executive, was “doing very well learning how to be a first-time dad.” *(The Week magazine, April 28, 2023)***

**Billy asks his Mom: “Did Mary and Joseph ever get up enough nerve to send Jesus to his room?” *(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)***

**What were we thinking? If you have persistently and lovingly tried to give your children wisdom and they haven't taken it, don't be hard on yourself. If God has trouble with His children, what made you think it would be a piece of cake for you? (Ted Kuegele, in The Lutheran Witness)**

**A measure of good parenthood could be when our children exceed our own achievements. (Tom Haggai, in Chrissie, I Never Had It So Bad)**

**Parenthood remains the greatest single preserve of the amateur. (Alvin Toffler, in Future Shock)**

**Failing and laughing at our own shortcomings are the hallmarks of a sane parent. (Jim Gaffigan, comedian)**

**The first handshake in life is the greatest of all: the clasp of an infant fist around a parent’s finger. (Mark Beltaire, in Detroit Free Press)**

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**Parenthood and happiness: Parents tend to say that their children bring them joy, but research consistently shows that raising kids causes marital stress and other varieties of unhappiness. A new long-range study may explain that contradiction, LiveScience.com reports. Demographers from Germany's Max Planck Institute surveyed 200,000 men and women in 86 countries and found that young parents with young children were generally unhappier than their childless peers, while older parents with older children were happier. Children, in other words, "may be a long-term investment in happiness," says study author Mikko Myrskyla. Globally, the contentment of couples under 30 decreased with the birth of their firstborn, and dropped further with each subsequent child they had. Conversely, parents over 50, no matter how many kids they'd raised, were happier than their childless counterparts. The trend was less pronounced in countries with highly developed welfare systems, like Switzerland, where parents and nonparents tended to be equally happy at any age. Myrskyla and his colleagues believe their findings suggest that the expense, anxiety, and lost sleep brought on by young children overshadow the positive aspects of parenthood -- until those kids grow up to become a source of financial and emotional support. (The Week magazine, March 25, 2011)**

**Kids can add to happiness: Having children won’t ruin your life after all. Two new studies have found that raising kids adds to people’s overall happiness – contradicting recent research that found that parents are more likely to be depressed and unsatisfied in their marriages than non-parents are. In one study, researchers tracked British and German couples from four years before they had children to four years after. They found “no evidence that parental well-being decreases after a child is born,” study author Mikko Myrskyla of Germany’s Max Planck Institute tells USA Today. He says some previous studies compared how couples felt just before they had children through the first year or two after the first child was born, when stress and sleeplessness caused a dip in their sense of well-being. That dip disappears later on. A second study, an analysis of surveys taken between 1972 and 2008, found that in recent decades, parents have become relatively happier than their childless peers. The findings also showed that parents who have children at an older age are happier than younger parents, and that the number of children they have is important. “The first child increases happiness quite a lot,” Myrskyla says. “The second child a little, the third not at all.” (The Week magazine, May 25, 2012)**

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**Having one child makes you a parent; having two makes you a referee. (Tidbits)**

**If I hadn't had children, I probably would have had more money and material things. I probably would have gone more places, gotten more sleep, pampered myself more. My life would have been much more boring and predictable. As a result of being a parent, I have laughed harder, cried more often. I have worried more and hurried more. I've had less sleep, but somehow I've had more fun. I've learned more, grown more. My heart has ached harder, and I've loved to a capacity beyond my imagination. I've given more of myself, but I've derived more meaning from life. (Dr. Marianne Neifert, from a speech)**

**Your children need your presence more than your presents. *(Jesse Louis Jackson)***

**I heard our cousin, who was visiting from Scotland, say to my 4-year-old son, "Geordie, do you realize how good your parents are to you?" I saw him turn cold brown eyes on her and reply, "It's their job." I broke up with laughter after bolting to the kitchen." (Laurie Hardie, in Country Extra magazine)**

**If you bungle raising your children then I don't think whatever else you do matters very much. (Jacqueline Kennedy, former first lady)**

**Peaceful parenting keys:**

1. **Peace begins with me.**
2. **I have made my home a place of kind words.**
3. **I catch my children in the act of positive behavior and praise them immediately, specifically and sincerely.**
4. **I spend at least 15 to 20 minutes a day with each child, listening, interacting and giving my full attention.**
5. **I am clear on the standards of behavior I expect of my children. I honor those standards and expect my children to do the same. (Naomi Drew, in Peaceful Parents, Peaceful Kids)**

**My parents treated me like I had a brain -- which, in turn, caused me to have one. (Diane Lane, in Hollywood Life)**

**The parent’s life is the child’s copybook. (Jewels of Home)**

**Kids. They’re not easy. But there has to be some penalty for sex. (Bill Maher)**

**Having children makes you no more a parent than having a piano makes you a pianist. (Michael Levine, in Lessons at the Halfway Point)**

**Oh, what a tangled web do parents weave when they think that their children are naïve. (Ogden Nash, in Family Reunion)**

**There is no scientific proof that a woman who has a career will have her children turn out bad. There’s also no proof that a woman who stays home and gives her life to her children will have them turn out good. In fact, when it comes to children, there’s no proof of anything. Good luck. (Barbara & Jim Dale, in The Working Woman’s Book)**

**Of all the new experiences parenthood has brought into my life, I was least prepared for the public rebukes. I was standing at a bus stop recently after a long workday with my 2-year-old, worried that we would be caught in an imminent downpour. As I searched my phone for the status of the next bus, a car sped by. "Watch your child!" the driver yelled unkindly. An immediate panic seized me, but my toddler, who had been holding my hand until a few moments earlier, was perfectly safe, intently examining the wall of a coffee shop not two feet away. The driver assumed he'd seen a neglectful mom absorbed in her phone, too busy scrolling through her Facebook feed to watch a wandering child. It didn't matter that it wasn't true; the reproach still stung. Passing public judgment on a stranger's parenting has become a national sport. Whole corners of the internet are dedicated to shaming mothers who decline to breast-feed, let their kids cry it out, or dare to sit the little one in front of the TV. Practices that were commonplace 30 years ago, such as allowing a child to walk alone to the playground or sit solo in the car for a few minutes during an errand run, now can lead to calls to the police and moms in handcuffs. This parenting paranoia makes little sense: Statistics prove it's never been safer to raise a child in the U.S., though we act as if the opposite were true. Raising a child used to take a village of neighbors helping you. Now it takes a village telling you why you're doing it all wrong. (Carolyn O'Hara, in The Week magazine, May 29, 2015)**

**Parenthood:**

* **Being a parent is like being pecked to death by a duck.**
* **Money isn’t everything, but it sure keeps the kids in touch.**
* **Your life’s “Golden Age” is the period when your kids are too old to require a baby sitter and too young to take the car.**
* **Shouting at your children to get their cooperation is about the same as steering your car using the horn . . . same results.**
* **Any child can tell you the sole purpose of a middle name is so they can tell when they are really in trouble.**
* **The only true child experts are those who do not yet have any of their own.**
* **Cleaning house with the children at home is like snowblowing during a blizzard.**
* **There are only two things that your child is absolutely willing to share: communicable diseases and their mother’s age. (Rocky Mountain News)**

**Postpartum perfectionism: New mothers who are overly concerned about being the “perfect parent” may be more at risk for postpartum depression, says LiveScience.com. Researchers at York University in Canada surveyed 100 first-time mothers and found a much higher rate of postpartum depression among women who hoped to live up to the expectation that they’d be perfect parents. The link between postpartum depression and perfectionism was strongest among women who’d never admitted they were scared or overwhelmed, and always acted as if everything was fine. “The tendency to put on this front usually means that people don’t tell other people when they’re doing badly,” says psychologist Gordon Flett. “It’s important for new mothers and fathers to just realize, “Hey, you haven’t got a lot of experience with this, you don’t need to be perfect, just do your best.” *(The Week magazine, July 23, 2010)***

**When a co-worker announced one morning that he and his wife were expecting their first child, we all gathered around to congratulate him. Someone asked whether he wanted a boy or a girl, and he replied that he didn't care what it was -- all he wanted was a healthy baby. So I asked, "What about your wife? Does she have a preference?" "Oh," he replied, "she's wants a boy too!" *(Constance Murdock, in Reader's Digest)***

Prescription for Parents: A New Zealand publication called The Reaper contained some interesting advice to moms and dads written by teenagers in jail. Here in essence is what they said:

1. **Keep cool; don’t lose your temper in the crunch. Kids need the reassurance that comes from controlled responses.**
2. **Don’t get strung out on booze or pills. We lose respect for parents who tell us to behave one way while they are behaving the other.**
3. **Bug us a little; be strict and consistent in giving out discipline.**
4. **Don’t blow your class; keep the dignity of parenthood.**
5. **Light a candle; show us the way.**
6. **Be strong. Don’t be afraid of us. If you catch us lying, stealing, or being cruel, get tough. When we need punishment, dish it out. But then let us know that you still love us.**
7. **Call our bluff; make it clear that you mean what you say. If you collapse, we will know we beat you down, and we will not be happy about the “victory.”**
8. **Be honest with us. Tell the truth no matter what. Be straight about it. (Our Daily Bread)**

**Parenthood remains the greatest single preserve of the amateur. (Kate Tracy)**

**The real menace in dealing with a 5-year-old is that in no time at all you begin to sound like a 5-year-old. (Jean Kerr, writer)**

**Having children is like living in a frat house -- nobody sleeps, everything's broken, and there's a lot of throwing up. (Ray Romano)**

**The secret of dealing successfully with a child is not to be its parent. (Mell Lazarus, Publishers-Hall Syndicate, cartoonist)**

**Having a two-year-old is like having a blender that you don’t have the top for. (Jerry Seinfeld)**

**Parenting without a filter: In the pre-Internet world, parents often shielded young children from gruesome and terrifying news events, said Dahlia Lithwick. "Those times are decidedly over. We are no longer the gatekeepers of our children's nightmares." My kids, 11 and 9, know more than I'd ever choose to tell them about the murdered parent of a schoolmate, a teacher arrested for child pornography, the murdered college student Hannah Graham, the Ottawa terrorist shooting, and "every last thing Ray Rice did in that elevator." Not incidentally, they don't own smartphones -- but many of their friends and older classmates do. All news is now viral, spreading instantly through the population, including kids. I'm not sure how to manage this problem, but I do feel certain that lying to children, or downplaying the seriousness of certain news events, isn't a viable solution. They already know too much. Trying to pretend the world isn't scary will only undermine the credibility of parents, teachers, and other adults. "Technology has transformed parenting and education," and we'll need to answer their questions about terrorism, murderers, and pedophiles as best we can. (The Week magazine, November 14, 2014**

**Smith's parenting style: Will Smith was raised by a father who expected him to be seen and not heard, said Grant Rollings in The Sun (U.K.). "I was brought up with, 'You don't talk to your parents about what your opinion is, you don't even have an opinion,'" says the actor. He and his wife, Jada Pinkett Smith, are raising their children -- Jaden, 14, and Willow, 12 -- in a very different manner. "We generally don't believe in punishment. From the time Jaden was 5 or 6 we would sit him down, and all he has to do is explain why what he did was the right thing for his life. It's a much more difficult question to ask -- 'Why was that right?' -- than to show them why it was wrong. So if he can explain why kicking his sister was the right thing to do, we can see to it that he understands it wasn't so smart." Some commentators have condemned the Smiths' liberal parenting style, including their recent decision to let Willow shave her head bald. "Well, the rule in our house is you can do anything you want and we don't pull the parent card until danger is involved (or if) it will have long-term repercussions. But she didn't cut my hair, she cut her own hair. It grows back." (The Week magazine, May 31, 2013)**

**Among the things that are so simple that even a child can operate them, are parents. (Matty Simmons, in The Saturday Evening Post)**

**Middle-income Americans earning between $59,410 and $102,870 can expect to spend an average of $234,900 raising a child from birth to age 17, according to a new government estimate. That is 3.5 percent higher than last year, mainly because of increases in the cost of gas, food, education, and child care. (Time.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, June 29, 2012)**

**Parenthood can affect pay. A recent study found that women with children earn 5 percent less per child than women without children. Fathers, on the other hand, are often offered higher starting salaries than their childless male counterparts. (NewYorker.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, May 24, 2013)**

**Statistics don't lie! If your parents never had children, chances are you won't either. (The PassTime Paper)**

**How good you are as a parent may depend on whether you think teenagers have problems or are problems. *(Doug Larson)*  
There are times when parenthood seems nothing but feeding the mouth that bites you. (Peter de Vries)**

**Thoughts on raising children:**

* **Raising a teen-ager is like nailing Jell-O to a tree.**
* **Life’s golden age is when the kids are too old to need baby-sitters and too young to borrow the family car.**
* **Grandparents are similar to a piece of string . . . handy to have around and easily wrapped around the fingers of grandchildren.**
* **No wonder kids are confused today. Half the adults tell them to find themselves; the other half tell them to get lost.**
* **Kids really brighten a household; they never turn off any lights. (Rocky Mountain News)**

**The toughest thing about raising kids is convincing them that you have seniority. (Gene Brown, in Danbury, Connecticut, News-Times)**

**Although today there are many trial marriages, there is no such thing as a trial child. (Gary Wills)**

**Most of the time I feel entirely unqualified to be a parent. I call these times being awake. (Jim Gaffigan, comedian)**

**Every parent is at some time the father of the unreturned prodigal, with nothing to do but keep his house open to hope. (John Ciardi, in Saturday Review)**

**Parents are the bones on which children cut their teeth. (Peter Ustinov, in National Enquirer)**

**If you want your children to turn out well, spend twice as much time with them, and half as much money. (Abigail Van Buren)**

**At times I want children, like when I’m lying down and can’t reach the remote, I think, “Boy, a kid would be nice right now.” (The PassTime Paper)**

**The way we talk to our children becomes their inner voice. (Peggy O'Mara, editor of Mothering magazine)**

**If adults didn’t always feel they had to wear armor, youth wouldn’t always be looking for the chinks in it. (Sydney J. Harris, Publishers-Hall Syndicate)**

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**Chiding "To lose one parent may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose both looks like carelessness." (Oscar Wilde)**

**Children begin by loving their parents; as they grow older they judge them; sometimes they forgive them. (Oscar Wilde)**

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**New Words for the Parentally Challenged:**

**Droppler Effect: The prolonged uneasy feeling parents experience when watching their toddler walk across the kitchen carrying a full glass of juice.**

**Impolert: A child's indiscreet call of attention in public to a stranger's physical abnormally (e.g., "Hey, look! He's only got one leg!").**

**Lullcry: The dramatic pause between a child's sustaining an injury and beginning to wail.**

**Nopen: To witness your kid pulling the car door handle just as you're trying to automatically unlock the doors, causing the doors to remain locked.**

**Wishjack: To blow out the candles on another child's birthday cake.**

**(Eric Ruhalter, in The Kid Dictionary)**

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*With the kids up and crying all night, the husband says to his wife: “Parenting would be easier . . . if we didn't need sleep.” *(Lynn Johnson, in For Better Or For Worse comic strip)***

**I asked my brother-in-law, the father of four boys, "If you had it to do all over again, would you still have kids?" "Yes," he said. "Just not these four." *(Sheila Lee, in Reader's Digest)***

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