



# Tips to Avoid Parental (and Adult Child)



## Regret

When our oldest daughter was a teenager I never thought I would hear, “I am so thankful for the way you raised me.” But from time to time we hear this from her, even though we’ve been through our share of battles and hard situations with her. She’s twenty-five and reality is showing her that Mom and Dad weren’t so wrong after all.

My poor parenting played a significant role in our battles. But God got my attention along the way and taught me a few things that helped me become a better mom and helped my kids grow into great adults. Here are a few of my hard-learned lessons that have benefited my kids and our relationships.

1. Teach your kids basic life skills then plan time to do them—daily, weekly, monthly. Yep, this sounds a lot like chores (and it is), but it is really preparation for life. Extracurricular activities are great, but shouldn’t consume your family’s schedule. Help each child decide on one activity (depending on time demands) per semester. This will allow time for the aforementioned chores, family time, and time for the child to be himself.
2. Realize and accept the reality that you will not be the mommy forever. In your heart begin to see your child as their own person not an extension of you. Start by allowing him to express himself in his clothes and hair (within moral boundaries).
3. What characteristics do you want your child to have when she leaves home? Responsible, good work ethic, honesty, kindness, etc.? What are you doing to teach these values to your child? For example:
  - Help your child make a budget. Give her an allowance to put it into practice. Make sure her budget includes frequent expenses that she is responsible for as well as savings.
  - Do you wake up your high school student? Who will do this when he is at college or when he is on his own who will get him up for work? Give him an alarm clock.
  - Let your child experience the real-life consequences of her own choices. Recently one of our daughters paid her speeding ticket from her hard-earned and long-saved money. I stood with her in the county clerk’s office as she counted out the money from her wallet. Next to us was a teen boy who also was paying a speeding ticket. However, his father was the one counting the money from his wallet. I wonder if this boy learned anything from his speeding ticket.
  - Know your child—his interests, talents, temperament. Encourage him along the way God designed him (Proverbs 22:6). Resist the temptation to sculpt him into someone he’s not. It will not end well.

As with all God’s kids (us included) there are no guarantees for success. But if we follow God’s lead as a parent we may hear, “Thanks, Mom! I appreciate the way you raised me.”