

How to Raise a Pure-minded Child in a Corrupt Culture

Has there ever been a time like this? Children, with the flip of a switch can bring on a television or computer screen pornographic pictures and seductive dramas. How can we help children to voluntarily turn off the filth and to choose that which is wholesome and lovely? I believe the answer is found in God's Word. "How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. . . . I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you" (Psalm 119:9, 11, NIV). The secret then is to preoccupy their minds with truth and goodness.

A father said to his son, "You seem to be fascinated with mechanical things. What would you think if we were to buy an old car, perhaps a collector's item, rebuild the engine and restore it, inside and out." Jerry thought it was a great idea so they began looking for old cars. They finally found one, just what they wanted, a 1935 Packard. It was owned by an old couple, and stored in a barn. Jerry was delighted! He could hardly wait to get home from school and get into his old clothes. So every night he and his father would work for a couple of hours.

Jerry, 16, really got to know his father as they worked and visited. Jerry's father was very open about life and so Jerry asked him about sex. The exchange was wholesome and honest. Jerry's father shared his faith journey. He told how he was converted and became a Seventh-day Adventist Christian.

Fathers are the key to both sons' and daughters' sexual purity. Dr. Ross Campbell, a psychiatrist and author said, "In all my reading and experience, I have never known of one sexually disoriented person who had a warm, loving, and affectionate father." *How to Really Love Your Child*, p. 73. The dangerous teen years are much easier if a child feels genuinely loved.

Visit with your teens about life — romance, sexuality, and vocation. Find a hobby or some activity that both you and your pre-teens or teens can enjoy together. Find something that relates to their natural aptitudes — sports, music, or other hobbies. And this advice applies to daughters as well as sons. Develop a closeness with your teens so they will come to you with their questions. You can be best friends with your teens. And remember to share your faith journey in an attractive way. Take time for fun, too. Do things as a family.

Parents, give an example of purity in thought, word, and deed. Fathers, in a kind, but firm way, take the reins of family government in

your hands. It has been said that "TV has our culture by the throat." Don't allow anything in your home that would corrupt — violence, profanity, or sexually explicit material. Study your TV guide together and as a family select certain programs that would be truly re-creation. Take Philippians 4:8 as your motto: "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable — if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think about such things" (NIV). Surround your children with good books and magazines. And remember to have daily family devotions. Make worship interesting and relevant. Sexuality should often be the subject of family discussion. Yes, even around the dinner table. If you are a single parent, you can play a dual role and with God's help meet these ideals.

Teens in today's world are under tremendous pressure to engage in premarital sex. Temptation saturates our culture. But it is possible to remain unsullied. Parents should often tell what they believe about sexuality and the reasons why. Roger Dudley says, "We *must* press adolescents to raise questions, identify the issues, and think through to the solutions, or they will reach adulthood with a set of 'values' that can easily collapse and disappear in a crisis because they have never been personally committed to them." *Passing on the Torch*, p. 66.

Dr. Kevin Leman says, "Don't hesitate to set up strict rules about what is allowed and not allowed." *Bringing Up Kids Without Tearing Them Down*, p. 323. We have said that the most important factor in protecting children from the corruptions of society is a close, loving relationship with parents.

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Dr. James Dobson urges parents to intercede with God for their children. For years he and his wife set aside one day a week for fasting and prayer for their two children. They prayed something like this: "O Lord, keep the circle of our little family unbroken when we stand before you on the Day of Judgment. Compensate for our mistakes and failures as parents, and counteract the influences of an evil world that would undermine the faith of our children. . . ." Dr. James C. Dobson, *Straight Talk to Men and Their Wives*, pp. 52, 53.

It's time for parents to claim God's promise: "I will contend with those who contend with you, and your children I will save" (Isa. 49:25, NIV).

