

BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR LUTHERAN SCHOOL

PRESENTS:

PEARLS OF LOVE AND LOGIC

Special Thoughts on Raising Kids

Giving Control without Giving It Away

We often hear how wise it is to give our children a certain amount of freedom and control over their lives. However, children who have more control than they know how to handle often act out in unbelievable ways to show us that they need limits. It's almost as if they are saying, "How bad do I have to act before you will control me?" This confuses parent and child alike. The child, having become addicted to power, demands more power while at the same time asking for parental control.

Children who start out with too much power force us to tighten the limits, and that makes them angry. Who wouldn't be mad? When control is taken away, children feel they are being robbed of something that is rightfully theirs.

Dr. Sylvia B. Rimm, psychologist, educator, and author, explains that we all compare the amount of control we have in a relationship to the control we used to have, not to how much we think we should have.

Dr. Rimm says loving parents use what she calls the "V" of love. The sides of the "V" stand for firm limits within which the child may make decisions and live with the consequences. The bottom point of the "V" represents birth, while the

open top of the "V" represents the time when the child will leave home. Toddlers decide about such things as chocolate or white milk. Ten-year-olds are deciding how to spend their allowances and the 17-year-olds make decisions about almost all aspects of their lives. Unfortunately, the "V" is turned upside down in families where the child is treated almost like a miniature adult right from birth. These youngsters become tyrants. We've all seen them hold their parents hostage to temper tantrums and pouting.

Children need the opportunity to make choices, but these choices should be within firm limits appropriate for their age. This is easier said than done. However, it helps to keep the "V" in mind, always leaving bigger decisions for the next year. Make sure there is more control available to the child this year than last.

Teachers are good resources regarding age-appropriate decisions for children. And remember, some of the greatest experts on parenting may be in your carpool or community. However, it is wiser to get advice from parents who have well-adjusted children than those whose youngsters are driving them crazy.

***Make Sure There Is More Control Available to Your
Child This Year Than Last Year***