

BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR LUTHERAN SCHOOL PRESENTS: PEARLS OF LOVE AND LOGIC

Special Thoughts on Raising Kids

Raising Daredevil Kids

No doubt the world is a dangerous place. Every day the headlines tell us of more violence. In some larger cities, cars are even being stolen while people are *in* them.

So, it is understandable that most parents feel less than secure about the well-being of their children. Because there are more problems, parents may become more watchful, careful, and protective. In fact, I have seen parents who are so vigilant in watching their children that simply “being vigilant” could be their full time job!

It is understandable that daredevil children raise vigilant parents. However, there is an easier way. *Teach the child to be vigilant!*

How do we do that? First, consider the three types of children:

1. Children who would never be “daredevilish” and never take risks
2. Death-defying little daredevils, who are at high risk. Death does not like to be defied very long!
3. Daredevils who take thoughtful risks, and whose chances of being hurt are slight.

This last group of children might be likened to trapeze artists, who, when performing amazing stunts

on the flying trapeze, use a safety net. In other words, what they do looks pretty daring, but is really pretty safe.

Children must be taught, when they are 2 or 3 years old, to be thoughtful daredevils, not death-defying daredevils. This is the stage of toddlerhood exploration. This is when parents start raising the three types of children listed above, and then who, in turn, will have their own buttons pushed by the child.

The first child - a child who timidly partakes of life and never takes risks, is raised by a parent who is constantly worried, giving messages such as:

“Be careful, you’ll get hurt. Oh, John, you scared the wits out of me! Please don’t do that!”

The second child - the child who may be at risk of death, usually is raised by frightened parents who show their worry with anger. When the child takes small risks in toddlerhood, the mother or father may angrily state:

“Stop that right now or you’ll get a swat! You make me so mad when you take those chances!”

The third type of child - a little daredevil who takes thoughtful risks, is raised by a parent who states: “If you do that, you might get hurt.” (The parent then does

not rescue.) “John, honey, the way you are behaving, this could be goodbye. If you kill yourself, I would miss you!”

Teach the child to be vigilant!

In essence, the message the first parent gives the child is, “The world is a scary place and I’m frightened for you.”

The second parent, raising a rebellious and foolish child, says, “The world is a dangerous place and I’m mad at you!” All children, on an unconscious basis, like to make their parents angry. They really can’t help themselves!

Finally, the third parent says, “The world may be a dangerous place, so I hope you watch out.”

A word of caution as we watch our daredevil kids at play:

Generally, we can sit back and make reasoned, thoughtful comments, unless they are doing something that is likely to cause serious injury or death, then immediate action is called for.

This is an issue that has to be carefully weighed, for the more severe the consequences, the more memorable the learning experience. But we don’t want the child to remember it from heaven!

