

***BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR
LUTHERAN SCHOOL
PRESENTS:
PEARLS OF LOVE AND LOGIC***
Special Thoughts on Raising Kids

Consistent Messages Produce Positive Results

When parents give inconsistent messages, they tend to raise negativistic and strong-willed children. As most children learn from modeling, the parent may not be modeling behavior they want the child to grow into! In short, it is hard for a child to really respect an inconsistent parent.

Two guidelines to follow in order to be consistent

Too many rules can cause parents to be inconsistent, or paint themselves into a corner. For example, you may decide your teen cannot stay out past 11:00 p.m. and then a special occasion comes along and you allow him/her to stay out later than 11:00 p.m. You have become inconsistent in your message. Instead of making hard and fast rules, treat each situation on an individual basis.

Sometimes parents are inconsistent because they give a consequence without really thinking it through. Parents are usually inconsistent if they come up with a consequence when they are angry.

An example might be, "Cindy, you're grounded for two weeks!" Later Cindy comes and says, "Gee, Dad, next week is the Senior Prom. Surely, you're not going to be so cruel you ground me from that?" The father is in a bind. If he doesn't go back on his word, and is consistent, he's really mean? On the other hand, giving in may breed disrespect. It's

better to wait for calm times to consequence your teen's behavior.

Teens have three options

Teens who hear inconsistent messages tend to think:

- Their parent doesn't think things through, but rather shoots from the hip
- Wonders if their parent is basically a push-over
- Wonders if their parent has their best interests at heart

Parents can change

Parents who give inconsistent messages can change by first admitting they are inconsistent and allowing the other parent to handle certain situations.

Or the inconsistent parent can talk it over with his/her teen:

"You know, John, I don't think I'm helping you very much because I'm inconsistent. I tell you one thing one minute, and then I tell you another thing another minute. I bet that leads you to think I don't know what I'm talking about most of the time. So I'm going to try and do less of that. If you see me being inconsistent, you may want to remind me about it in a thoughtful way."

Keep in mind, though, your teen may only remind you when it's in his/her favor to do so.

Consistent Parents. . .

- 1. Treat each situation on an individual basis, instead of making hard and fast rules.***
- 2. Wait for calm times to consequence behavior.***