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Teach Your Children Well: Why Values And Coping Skills Matter More Than Grades, Trophies, Or "Fat Envelopes"



Teach Your Children Well

Parenting for Authentic Success

Why Values and Coping Skills Matter More Than Grades, Trophies, or "Fat Envelopes"

Madeline Levine, PhD

Author of *The Price of Privilege*



Synopsis

Psychologist Madeline Levine, author of the New York Times bestseller The Price of Privilege, brings together cutting-edge research and thirty years of clinical experience to explode once and for all the myth that good grades, high test scores, and college acceptances should define the parenting endgame. Teach Your Children Well is a toolbox for parents, providing information, relevant research and a series of exercises to help parents clarify a definition of success that is in line with their own values as well as their children's interests and abilities. Teach Your Children Well is a must-read for parents, educators, and therapists looking for tangible tools to help kids thrive in today's high-stakes, competitive culture.

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Customer Reviews

There are three major ideas from this book that I really liked-1. Focus on what you're doing right rather than what is wrong.2. We need to have a more complete picture of what success is.3.

Parents should focus on life skills more. I agree with all of those things. As a mom with 4 teens at home, I am very interested in preparing them for the world in ways that help them be successful. That said, to me, the author seems completely unaware of her own privilege. My kids

have grown up on a farm and have had jobs since they were 11-13. My experience is so disconnected for the picture she was painting that I just cannot relate. She presupposes that her experience is representative. Not only is it not representative, it isn't even related. I also disagree with her advice on sex. The idea that kids are going to have sex and we should just accept that is bothersome to me. I understand that some teens have sex. I have realistic discussions with my kids about birth control, stds, pregnancies, and heartache. But I do think that helping kids postpone premature sexual activity is a worthy goal. We should not just assume it's inevitable. So basically, this is a decent child rearing guide for upper middle class parents of suburban kids who are growing up without some very basic life experiences. That sounds like I am dismissive or critical. I am neither. But the truth is that the children this book is about are very well protected from reality. They truly do need someone to teach them values, instill a sense of purpose and prepare them for life. Otherwise they'll all become politicians and investment bankers.

I have four kids, so I read a lot of parenting books. I had heard of Dr. Levine's, "The Price of Privilege," but had not read it...so I wasn't sure what to expect from this book. I feel so lucky to have read it. There is so much great information here. In reality, it's like four parenting books in one. I really loved this quote from the book, "While we all hope our children will do well in school, we hope with even greater fervor that they will do well in life. Our job is to help them to know and appreciate themselves deeply; to approach the world with zest; to find work that is exciting and satisfying, friends and spouses who are loving and loyal; and to hold a deep belief that they have something meaningful to contribute to society. That is what it means to teach our children well." The thing is, our society/culture is not set up for that. Right now, we're all focused on grades and money. Most schools only reward those who excel in athletics or English and math--we forget about all the other areas where kids (and people) can excel. Parents care that kids get into a "good" school more than they care about whether or not that college is a good fit for their kids. Kids are over-programmed and denied play (especially unstructured), art, and music. We're doomed for failure if we continue this way. I loved so much about this book. It was a wake up call. One nice aspect missing in many parenting books is that Dr. Levine isn't just focused on young kids, she breaks the book down into early elementary, middle school, and high school--and talks about what kids need at each stage. The last part of the book is focused on seven essential skills kids need to develop to thrive. She includes real concrete ideas on how to teach your kids these skills too. Can't say enough good things about this book. Filled with real-life examples, too. Excellent.

As a mom of four kids, I am a junkie for books on child development. Even though I've read a variety of books on this topic, this book still offered new gems of insight. I felt it really shined in its explanations of developmentally appropriate behavior. For example, my son, a recent 1st grade graduate told me he was "really good" at reading and math. He is good at math, but definitely not exceptional at reading. This book explained that before age 8, kids often do not compare their abilities against their classmates, thus have a high view of their competencies. I was interested to read the research showing the impact involved dads have in their kids' lives and dog eared these pages to share with my husband. These are just a couple of useful bits of info I learned from this book. Child development (part two of this book) is divided into three sections - Elementary Years, Middle School Years and High School Years. I found all three sections helpful, even though my oldest is only 7. (If you are of an "abstinence-only" mindset you may find her attitude about sex a little cavalier.) There is much to glean from all three of these chapters. This book isn't a bunch of ivory tower research. Part Three of the book contains practical tips for creating resilience in children. Part Four is about "becoming the parents we want to be." Both sections give ways to apply what you've just read in your day-to-day life. Overall, I enjoyed this book. It was easy to read and practical.

I will be giving EVERY parent and teacher I know a copy of this book! Dr. Levine starts by talking about how we as a society (and as parents today) tend to view success for our children-good grades, Ivy League schools, LOTS of activities and sports. She explains that although it's not necessarily a bad thing to push our children, we need to adjust our perception of success so we don't create either self-centered, emotionally stunted kids, or the reverse, children who feel so over pressured they shut down and become complete "failures" in our view. The book is broken up into 4 sections: 1) Authentic Success: It's not about bleeding hearts vs. tiger moms 2) The "School Years" are not just about academics: A Primer on child development 3) The Resilience Factor: Seven Essential coping skills 4) Walking the Talk. Each of the sections addresses an important part of her belief that parenting is not about raising the "Best" kid in society's eyes, but raising kids who can and do make the best decisions for who they are and who they think they may want to become. As a parent of small children (1 year old and 3 years old) I am so glad I read this book now. There is an entire section that encourages parents to hone-in on the beliefs they want to raise their children with and how to go about instilling these morals in a meaningful way instead of a forceful "Because I said so" way. That being said, this book really is more for parents of school aged children, so if you have young kids, it's great to read, but when they start school, you'll want to read it again to

refresh!Overall, I love the idea that we as parents need to stop, step back, and look at what is best for our kids emotional, spiritual, and social well being and stop pressuring them to be what society says is the "Best"!

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