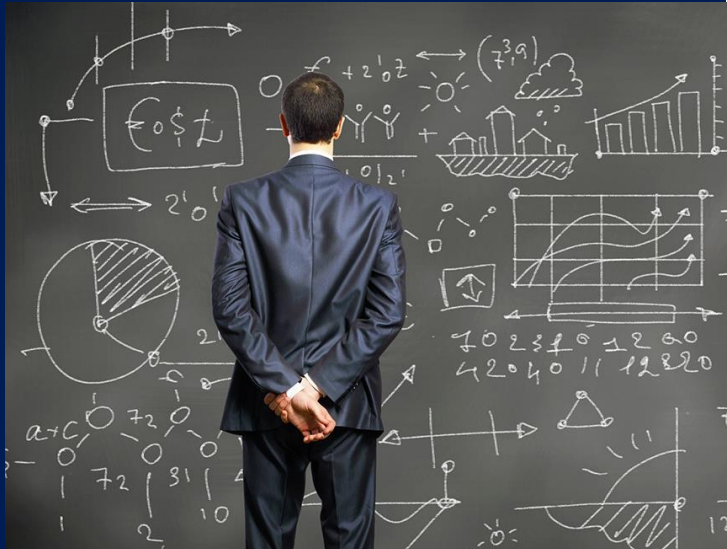


Instilling Passion in Children



Passion, motivation, and fulfillment is the recipe for a happy life.

Every parent wants their children to grow into happy and productive adults who are grounded with a strong personal values. As children's biggest role models, parents can lead by example by demonstrating firsthand the joys and benefits of having passion, interest, and a sense of purpose. Active, engaged children turn into motivated and successful adults, no matter what age. At the end of the day, passion, motivation, and fulfillment is the recipe for a happy, successful life.

Promote Activities That Spark Interest:

Do you remember how much you loved a certain activity as a kid? It is never too early for your own children to discover passions and interests. Encourage them to get involved in activities like sports, music, after-school clubs, outdoor activities and volunteer work. These programs allow your children to explore a world beyond the protective walls of home, meet new people, learn skills, and develop a new identity all their own. They also get to experience something bigger than themselves and learn important lessons about working, sharing, and leading others. Life is full of stories of happy and successful adults who first found their passion and life mission through their involvement and interest in programs as a child.



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The important thing is that they stay productive and keep moving towards finding a path, even if they do not have a clear idea of what they are working towards. Sometimes it takes people a little longer than others to derive meaning from their lives, and that is completely okay. As long as they have your love, support, and encouragement, they will discover where they want to productively devote their time.

Lead By Example:

Do you have a hobby aside from your career that you are passionate about? The best way to instill passion in children is by demonstrating genuine passion in your own life. As the old saying goes, be sure to model the behavior you want to see in your children. While your interests and activities may not necessarily be shared by your children, what will resonate is the sense of enjoyment, satisfaction, and commitment you get from being actively involved in something you care about and believe in.

It is important to participate in non-work related hobbies in your spare time in order to teach your children that productive balance between work and free time is necessary for your mental health. Whether you love fishing, painting, etc., encourage your children to find a hobby that they enjoy and to regularly set aside time to partake in it. Investing in self is a valuable lesson to demonstrate to your children in order for them to find balance in their lives.

Communication is Key:

How would you feel if your mother & father made every decision on what activities you were going to do and when? In today's world where every decision is framed as being absolutely critical, sometimes parents need to back off in order to let their children feel like they have a voice and can make decisions on their own. Recognizing and respecting their space will give them room to flourish and grow into adults.

Keeping a nonthreatening, open line of communication between you and your children, and even participating in constructive arguments, is healthy and can help children assert their autonomy. Although it is easy to get frustrated when your children disagree with you, consider their point of view and allow them to have a say in what they partake in.

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For example, if you want your children to participate in extracurricular activities, allow them to decide if they want to partake in sports, the arts, and/or clubs. By being given the choice, rather than feeling like it was being chosen for them, children will take more responsibility for their obligations and will hold themselves accountable

Naturally, children may not agree with certain rules regarding allowance, curfew, etc. and you should welcome the opportunity to negotiate with them. This way, they will develop mature persuasive skills and will feel as though they have some sort of control over their lives while the parents ultimately have the final say, which will maintain balance. The goal is that children will feel a sense of ownership and feel legitimized, rather than feeling so much pressure that they begin to resent certain aspects of their lives.

Final Thoughts:

It is important to guide your children towards activities and lifestyle choices that will help them to grow into productive, passionate individuals; however, they should be interested in what they chose to do. If your child is coerced into obligations that they are not passionate about, even if they are talented, their lack of interest will make their time feel meaningless.

It is natural to want to protect your children, no matter what. However, it is important to let them spread their wings and fly, even if that means they have to fail a few times in order to find out where they thrive. Do not fear adversity for your child, welcome it. How they learn to handle difficulties and roadblocks will only make them stronger, smarter, and more satisfied in the long run.

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