

Counselor's Corner-Not My Child!

I like to share with parents that one approach to parenting is not “if my child ever does A, B, or C” but rather, “when my child ...”

Being aware that our children are capable of poor decisions or poor behavior is a step in the direction of the reality of raising them. Not if, but when. It doesn't mean it is 100% likely, but the likelihood is higher than 0%!

It is easy to see the fault in a child that is not our own. Much more difficult to see, accept or admit that our own child may be making some not-so-stellar choices. It is true that these choices may be the company they keep, but also taking into account your child's own free will is important part of teaching them how to *improve* their choices. That said, part of becoming who we are is often stumbling through our bad choices. So, awareness and acceptance that mistakes are part of growing up AND of parenting.

Awareness is a means of opening the door to communication. If parents, for example, acknowledge the possibility — and in fact, the likelihood — that their child may have experimented with or used alcohol or marijuana, they can begin to talk to them more about it, give guidance, and allow their kids to ask questions. Of course, we hope, that these are issues found as our children are a little older, but I am putting it in a grade school newsletter so that you don't say, “Not my kid.”

Lying, friendship issues, language, stealing, gossiping-you name the talking point.

1.Teach. 2.Guide. 3.Model. 4.Accept. 5. Forgive. Repeat directions 1-5.

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The teaching never stops