

## **Of Course Your Kid Doesn't Listen and Here's What to Do About It**

The big discussion at last night's workshop was pretty much kids who don't listen and talk back.

I discussed changes in the family and parenting over the last 50 years. We have moved from predominantly intact two parent families with a parent always in the home, to many single led families or where even with intact two-parent families, both must be employed in order to make ends meet. To add, our use of technology distracts from connecting with our very own kids.

Parents don't realize how social, economic and technological changes has so affected parenting and by extension, our kids.

As parents we are fatigued and burnt out simply surviving. We too are distracted.

When you look at those changes from the eyes of the child, we have children who used to receive ongoing supervision and guidance, to children who are frequently left to their own devices (figuratively and literally).

When we as parents are in our kids' space these days, it is often to only bark out directives or admonish for tasks not completed or to cave into demands because we are either too fatigued to hold our ground or alternately feeling guilty and looking to assuage our guilt by giving in. How can that be good? How could that not foster resentment and/or entitlement?

Because we just don't have the same rapport/relationship with our kids owing to those changes, we have a generation of disengaged resentful kids.

No wonder they don't listen and talk back. On the one hand we leave them marginally supervised and quite independent and then we expect them to jump to our tune. If we do not understand the experience of the child in this situation, we cannot change behavior.

BTW – punishment is not the answer. Relationship building is.

No relationship; no influence.

No relationship; resentful and defiant behavior.

The challenge is on us to reconnect to fight the disease of disengagement.

1. Come home: Turn off your phone;
2. Once home: Hunt your kid down and give them a kiss;
3. At home: Have a meal together – no phones or devices on or at the table;
4. At Bedtime: No devices in the bedroom. SLEEP – we all need it!

BTW – This guidance is for all members of the family – parents and children alike.

The issue isn't whether we are good parents. The issue is our presence.

Simply put, our kids need us more and we need each other to turn off the noise to hear each others' cry for love and connection.

Be warned though, when you follow the guidance, your kids won't know what happened and they will resist.

They resist, you persist.

Persist with the understanding that you must at all times remain calm and in control of your own behavior. If your child loses their cool, just observe and maintain your own. Your calm is necessary for them to find their calm. They must see calm as an option to find and take it. Once calm, don't finger point, but hug.

Be calm. Concentrate on love and connection and that behavior may take care of itself.

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