

Why your kids should not be the most important people in your family

By John Rosemond



Think making your child the centre of your universe makes you good parents? Think again.

I recently asked a married couple who have three kids, none of whom are yet teens: "Who are the most important people in your family?"

Like all good mums and dads of this brave new millennium, they answered, "Our kids!"

"Why?" I then asked. "What is it about your kids that gives them that status?" And like all good mums and dads of this brave new millennium, they couldn't answer the question other than to fumble with appeals to emotion.

So, I answered the question for them: "There is no reasonable thing that gives your children that status."

I went on to point out that many if not most of the problems they're having with their kids - typical stuff, these days - are the result of treating their children as if they, their marriage, and their family exist because of the kids when it is, in fact, the other way around. Their kids exist because of them and their marriage and thrive because they have created a stable family.

Furthermore, without them, their kids wouldn't eat well, have the nice clothing they wear, live in the nice home in which they live, enjoy the great vacations they enjoy, and so on. Instead of lives that are relatively carefree (despite the drama to the contrary that they occasionally manufacture), their children would be living lives full of worry and want.

This issue is really the heart of the matter. People my age know it's the heart of the matter because when we were kids it was clear to us that our parents were the most important people in our families. And that, right there, is why we respected our parents and that, right

there, is why we looked up to adults in general. Yes, once upon a time, children were second-class citizens - to their advantage.

It was also clear to us - I speak, of course, in general terms, albeit accurate - that our parents' marriages were more important to them than their relationships with us.

Therefore, we did not sleep in their beds or interrupt their conversations. The family meal, at home, was regarded as more important than after-school activities. Mum and Dad talked more - a lot more - with one another than they talked with you. For lack of pedestals, we emancipated earlier and much more successfully than have children since.

The most important person in an army is the general. The most important person in a corporation is the CEO. The most important person in a classroom is the teacher. And the most important people in a family are the parents.

The most important thing about children is the need to prepare them properly for responsible citizenship. The primary objective should not be raising a straight-A student who excels at three sports, earns a spot on the Olympic swim team, goes to an A-list university and becomes a prominent brain surgeon. The primary objective is to raise a child such that community and culture are strengthened.

"Our child is the most important person in our family" is the first step toward raising a child who feels entitled.

You don't want that. Unbeknownst to your child, he doesn't need that.

John Rosemond is a family psychologist.

Source: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/life-style/parenting/87930732/Why-your-kids-should-not-be-the-most-important-people-in-your-family>