

5 Ways to Keep Your Kids From Being Naïve

On October 30, 1938, Orson Welles broadcast his infamous “War of the Worlds” *Mercury Theatre* episode (CBS radio). The first 30 minutes were presented as a series of simulated news bulletins from an “in progress” invasion from Mars.

While the “widespread panic” often referenced as having followed the broadcast is an exaggeration, many listeners believed an invasion was actually happening.

On April 1, 1957, the British television news magazine *Panorama* celebrated April Fool’s Day by broadcasting a three-minute segment about that year’s bumper spaghetti harvest in southern Switzerland. The report was a well-meaning hoax, but hundreds of people were still taken in.

Everyone enjoys a good joke, but no one wants to be the victim of a bad one. More often than not, it’s hard to know where to draw the line.

Regardless of our stance on the fine line between teasing, joking around and bullying, All Pro Dads would be well advised to consider the following five ways to keep your kids from being naïve.

1. Be a family that’s well-informed. Read a daily newspaper. Subscribe to a couple of kid-friendly periodicals that are news-oriented, rather than gossip and trash. If TV is part of your kids’ diet, require some news shows as part of the mix.

2. Engage your kids in constant dialogue. Be prepared (and informed enough) to talk about current events with your children. Direct the conversation. Make it fun to be “up” on current events. Have a world map in the kitchen or dining room, and make world geography and current events a visual

part of ongoing conversation.

3. Keep the lines of communication open and fresh. Don't allow yourself to become oblivious to what's going on in your kids' lives. That means not being naïve yourself! Cultivate a culture of openness, where checking things out with "the parents" is par for the course. Be an expected part of their knowledge-base resource.

4. Teach a healthy level of skepticism. Teach the kids to question everything—respectfully—and to apply the principles of academic rigor to all their interactions and conversations. Gullibility is a cultivated condition. To be forewarned is to be forearmed. Help your kids keep their guards up in a respectful, non-argumentative way. Make sure they hear stories about hoax situations and that they are well aware that naïveté is unnecessary.

5. Learn with your children. Make it obvious to the kids that mom and dad are always learning, too. Arrogance or "I'd never fall for that" declarations can make your children shy about opening up or asking questions. A family culture where learning is an ongoing discipline for everyone is not only a hedge against naïveté, but also a huge step toward success in school ... college ... life.

All Pro Dad is Family First's innovative and unique program for every father. Their aim is to interlock the hearts of the fathers with their children and, as a byproduct, the hearts of the children with their dads. At , dads in any stage of fatherhood can find helpful resources to aid in their parenting. Resources include daily emails, blogs, Top 10 lists, articles, printable tools, videos and eBooks. From , fathers can join the highly engaged All Pro Dad social media communities on **Facebook, Twitter, YouTube** and **Instagram**.