

Effectively Mentor Your Children in the Lord With These 7 Critical Steps

It was once said that everyone needs a mentor and everyone needs to be mentored. And you would be hard-pressed to find anyone who would disagree with that statement. However, most of us, as fathers, were never formally trained on how to mentor anyone, especially our children.

Having mentored, coached, and disciplined more than 150 men, and being a father of a 20-year old son and 14-year old daughter, I would like to give you a crash course on seven critical steps to effectively mentoring your children. Effective mentoring is not as difficult as you might think.

Step 1- Character:

It is crucial that, as a mentor, you be a person of integrity. Your character is who you are when nobody's looking. No man can be a good mentor and lead successfully without learning how to successfully lead himself. So it is critical that you mirror your message when mentoring your kids; which means you must be an example to them, not an excuse.

Step 2- Commitment:

Being a good mentor isn't about being a promise-maker; it's about being a promise-keeper. Effective mentors keep their commitments to their mentees. Keep your word to your children, especially when it comes to negative consequences. Your children must know that you say what you mean and you mean what you say. You must become one of the most reliable and dependable people they know.

Step 3- Connection:

Effective mentors “connect” for respect; meaning, they don’t demand respect from others, they earn it. And mentors earn it through honesty and transparency with their children. That means you must share your personal story with your children and not just the good parts. Let them know where they started, what almost stopped you, and what turned your life around.

Step 4- Compassion:

It’s one thing to mentor with passion, but an effective mentor also mentors with “com-passion.” As a father, you must create a safe place for your children to share and heal as well as a healthy place for them to learn and grow. Sometimes you may have to get in their face to correct them, but you have to let them know you’re always on their side.

Step 5- Communication:

It’s not what we say or what we meant to say, but what’s actually understood; and effective mentors lead by listening, not lecturing. You have to learn how to ask the “right” questions, hold your children accountable, and empower, not enable, them in the pursuit of their goals. It’s your job to be understood, and it’s also your job to make sure you understand.

Step 6- Coaching:

Experience may be a good teacher, but other people’s experience is an even better one. You can only take your children as far as you’ve traveled; so even as a mentor, you must show and demonstrate to your children how you got there and what potholes and pitfalls to avoid. Help them learn from your experience.

Step 7- Consistency:

If commitment gets you started, then consistency keeps you going. An effective mentor stays in constant contact with

whomever they're mentoring. Because ultimately, mentoring is about building and maintaining relationships. There's no such thing as an effective part-time father, and there's no such thing as an effective part-time mentor. You may not be able to do everything for your children, but they should know you will always be there for them when they need you the most.

What do you think is most important in mentoring others? {eo}

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This article originally appeared at .