



PARENTING AS PARTNERS
PRESENTED BY: STEPHANIE BARRY AGNEW
Los Altos United Methodist Church Children's Center
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Stephanie has an extensive background in Early Childhood Education with 20 years of teaching experience in Palo Alto area schools. She was trained at Bing Nursery School while getting her degree at Stanford and has taught all preschool age groups. She owned her own small preschool in Palo Alto for 5 years and worked as a parent educator at The Children's Health Council for 6 years where she was also the director of the Parent Education Program for 2 years. Since 2002 she has been working independently and for the Parents Place in Palo Alto as a Parent Educator and Preschool Consultant. Stephanie's specialties include young child behavior management, Kindergarten readiness, school choices and preschool teacher training and support. She teaches parenting classes, gives one session talks, leads teacher training workshops, observes children at home and at school and offers individual parents information and support about a wide array of parenting issues. She also has two daughters in college.

- I. The Stages of Parenthood
 1. Imagining the infant
 2. Nurturing
 3. Setting Limits
 4. Mediating
 5. Stepping Back
 6. Launching
- II. How You Were Raised
- III. The Positive Discipline Approach
- IV. Why do children need to misbehave?
- V. Why do we need to set limits?
- VI. What makes it hard for couples?
- VII. How and why we need to find the middle ground
- VIII. Make time to nurture your relationship
- IX. Make time to nurture yourself

PARENT CENTERED FAMILIES PARENTING AS PARTNERS

Children are more likely to develop competent life skills when parents:

1. Stick together
2. Make rules
3. Define consequences
4. Stay in charge

In order to have a “Parent Centered Family”, couples:

1. Try to develop a balance – Create enough structure for the children to feel safe, secure, and loved, while giving them enough freedom to express themselves and become their own person.
2. Negotiate their differences – Couples need to work through their differences to give their kids a single, clear message about family issues. This requires making a commitment to work as a team, taking the time to talk, and offering compromises to find rules and consequences that both are willing to support. Children will benefit from knowing what is expected of them and they will be less likely to try to play one parent off the other.
3. Make rules they both believe in
4. Stay on the Parent Team
5. Make sure they both participate in disciplining
6. Encourage and back each other up when enforcing a rule
7. Families work best when the primary connections are between people of the same generation

PARENTING AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

1. What did you look forward to the most about having a family with your spouse?
2. What did you look forward to most about being a parent yourself?
3. What do you enjoy most about your role as a parent today?
4. What do you find most difficult about being a parent today?
5. Did you expect the roles and relationships within your family unit would be different than you find they are today? If so, how?