

What We Thought Was Right (But Isn't)

Parenting Practices That May Need a Rethink

A Hummingbird Parenting Partnership Series





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Parenting Practices That May Need a Rethink

As parents, we often rely on advice passed down through generations, follow common societal beliefs, or trust popular trends when it comes to raising our children.

However, not all widely practiced parenting methods are rooted in science. Some may be outdated, misunderstood, or even counterproductive in today's fast-evolving world. It's important to pause, reflect, and ask: Are these practices truly helping our children — or are they simply habits shaped by culture, marketing, or outdated advice?

This newsletter brings awareness to common parenting myths that often seem harmless (or even helpful) but can have unintended consequences. For parents of children aged 2 to 10, understanding the facts behind these beliefs will help you make more thoughtful, informed decisions rooted in your child's unique needs and supported by research.

Let's explore these myths, uncover the facts, and embrace healthier, more balanced parenting approaches together.



Chapter 1: FOUNDATION

Core Parenting Mindsets



The Burden of Being a ‘Perfect Parent’

Myth:

Perfect parents raise perfect children.

Fact:

There is no such thing as a perfect parent — and trying to become one often leads to burnout, guilt, and anxiety.

Children thrive with “good enough” parents who are consistent, loving, and human.

Potential risks:

Parental exhaustion, loss of joy in parenting, unrealistic expectations, strained relationships, and projecting perfectionist pressures onto children.

Recommendation:

Let go of unrealistic standards. Focus on connection, understanding, and building a healthy family rhythm. Children need warmth, not perfection.



Good Parenting Means Keeping Children Always Happy

Myth:

Good parenting means keeping children happy all the time. A happy child is a sign of successful parenting.

Fact:

Constant happiness is neither realistic nor healthy. Constantly trying to keep a child happy can lead to unrealistic expectations and poor emotional regulation. Children need to experience a full range of emotions — happiness, sadness, frustration, disappointment — to develop emotional strength, resilience, emotional intelligence and coping skills.

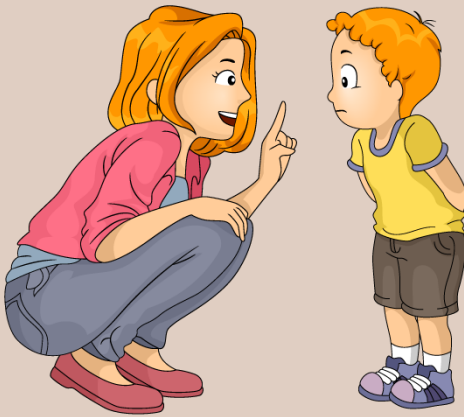
Potential risks:

Difficulty handling discomfort, failure, or conflict | Poor emotional resilience | Dependency on external factors for happiness | Fear of disappointment | Unrealistic expectations from parents and others

Recommendation:

Focus on raising emotionally healthy children, not just happy ones. Teach them it's okay to feel upset, angry, or sad sometimes.

Allow children to feel and work through different emotions. Support them with empathy, but let them face age-appropriate challenges. True good parenting raises resilient children who can handle life's ups and downs.



Parents Always Know What the Child Wants

Myth:

Parents always know what their child wants, needs, or feels — after all, they've known them since birth.

Fact:

While parents know their children well, children are individuals with their own thoughts, emotions, and evolving needs. Assuming we always know, what they want can lead to misunderstandings, frustration, and missed opportunities for meaningful communication. Listening matters more than guessing.

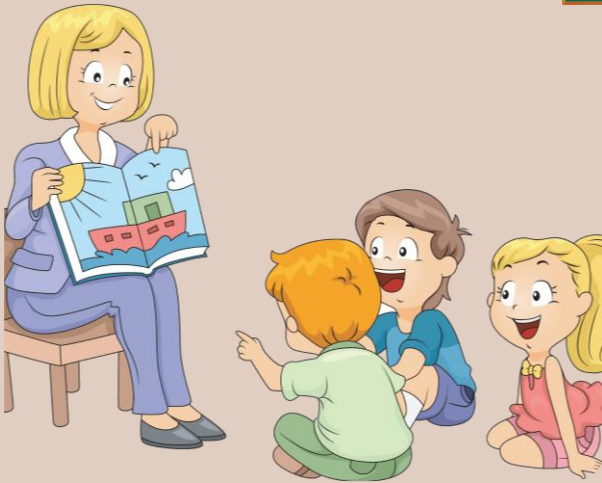
Potential risks:

Children feeling unheard or misunderstood | Suppression of emotions or needs | Difficulty in expressing themselves clearly | Strained parent-child relationships over time | Loss of trust in communication

Recommendation:

Create open channels for honest conversations. Ask, listen, and observe without assuming. Encourage children to express their needs, thoughts, and feelings in their own words.

This builds trust, confidence, and better emotional health — for both child and parent. Listen actively, validate their emotions, and guide them rather than assuming for them.



Big and Branded schools are Better than Independent schools

Myth:

Big Branded schools are always better because they follow strict standards ,offer guaranteed quality and provide quality education

Fact:

A school's quality depends far more on its leadership, teachers, environment, and approach than on a big brand name. Many independent preschools provide more personalized attention, flexibility, and stronger child-centered learning. A brand does not guarantee better emotional care or developmental understanding.

Potential risks:

Paying higher fees for marketing, not quality | Over-standardized systems that overlook individual child needs | Mistaking brand name for real quality care | Ignoring red flags simply because of reputation

Recommendation:

Evaluate a preschool by observing classrooms, interacting with teachers, and understanding how children are cared for and taught. Prioritize warmth, flexibility, communication, and a joyful environment over logos or promises.



Chapter 2: GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

Child Psychology and Needs



Early Academic Push – Starting Early for Success

Myth:

The earlier children start reading, writing, and math, the more successful they will be.

Fact:

Child development experts agree that early academic pressure can harm natural curiosity. Emotional, social, and cognitive readiness varies, and children learn best when allowed to explore at their own pace through play-based learning.

Pushing children too early into academics can create stress and reduce curiosity.

Potential risks:

Stress, anxiety, reduced love for learning, burnout, and struggles with confidence. Early academic overload may lead to short-term memorization but weak long-term understanding. It may also lead to Loss of joy in learning, increased anxiety, weaker problem-solving, and burnout at a young age

Recommendation:

Encourage curiosity, conversation, story time, and exploration. Follow developmentally appropriate milestones, not peer pressure. Focus on readiness, curiosity, and play as tools of early learning rather than rushing formal academics



Playing is fine. But, Studying is important

Myth:

Play is just for fun; serious learning happens in books

Fact:

Play develops creativity, problem-solving, social skills, and emotional balance. It is the child's natural way of learning.

Potential risks:

Children deprived of play may struggle with social interactions, emotional regulation, and innovative thinking.

Recommendation:

Encourage unstructured play alongside structured activities. Protect playtime as essential, not optional. This is where deep, joyful learning happens.

How Our Behavior Shapes Theirs



Myth:

Children learn from what we teach them verbally

Fact:

Children absorb behaviors by observing parents far more than by being told. Actions model values more powerfully than words.

Potential risks:

Contradictory messages between what is said and done create confusion, mistrust, or mimicry of negative behaviors.

Recommendation:

Be mindful of your everyday actions. Model the behavior you want your child to learn — respect, kindness, responsibility



Screen Time and The Real Impact of it

Myth:

A bit of screen time doesn't harm children

Fact:

Excessive screen time, even educational, can impact attention span, sleep, and social skills. Real-world interaction is irreplaceable.

Potential risks:

Reduced focus, sleep disturbances, weaker communication skills, and emotional dependency on devices.

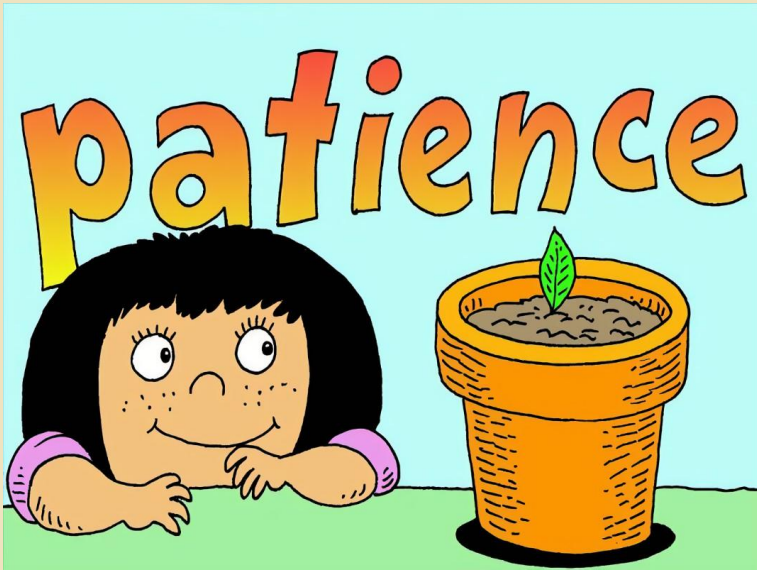
Recommendation:

Set healthy screen limits, balance with physical activity, and prioritize face-to-face engagement

Chapter 4:
BUILDING LIFE SKILLS

Habits, Character & Resilience





Teaching Patience and Delayed Gratification

Myth:

Children naturally develop patience as they grow.

Fact:

Patience and self-control must be taught and practiced. Delayed gratification is linked to stronger academic, emotional, and social outcomes.

Potential risks:

Impatience may lead to impulsive behavior, poor frustration tolerance, and difficulty with long-term goals.

Recommendation:

Use small everyday opportunities — like waiting turns or saving treats — to help children build patience gradually.



Fear of Failure in Children

Myth:

Failure should be avoided at all costs to protect a child's confidence

Fact:

Failure is an essential teacher. Learning to handle mistakes builds resilience, problem-solving, and true confidence.

Potential risks:

Children may avoid challenges, develop perfectionism, or struggle with anxiety and low self-esteem.

Recommendation:

Normalize mistakes, share your own failures, and celebrate effort over outcome. Help children see failure as growth



How to Build a Reading Habit Without Forcing It

Myth:

Children will only read if forced into a routine.

Fact:

Reading should be enjoyable, not a chore. Creating positive associations with books sparks curiosity and love for learning.

Potential risks:

Forced reading can create resistance, boredom, or lifelong disinterest in books.

Recommendation:

Make reading a shared, fun experience. Provide variety, read aloud together, and let children choose what interests them

Chapter 5:
CHALLENGES & BEHAVIOUR

Addressing Difficult
Situations





Aggressive Children Become Confident When They Grow Up

Myth:

Childhood aggression is a sign of future confidence.

Fact:

Unaddressed aggression often turns into poor social skills and difficulty in relationships. Confidence grows from self-control, not aggression.

Potential risks:

Strained friendships, school difficulties, long-term behavioral issues.

Recommendation:

Teach healthy expression of emotions, model calm conflict resolution, and guide children toward empathy and problem-solving



Why Kids Repeat the Same Mistakes (And Why That's Normal)

Myth:

If a child repeats mistakes, they are not learning.

Fact:

Repetition is part of the learning process. Children need multiple attempts before mastering self-control or understanding consequences.

Potential risks:

Parents may become overly punitive or frustrated, harming the child's confidence and communication.

Recommendation:

Be patient and consistent. Reinforce learning gently and allow room for repeated practice without shaming



Helping Children with Separation Anxiety

Myth:

Children with separation anxiety are overly dependent and weak.

Fact:

Separation anxiety is a normal developmental phase. With support, children outgrow it and build independence

Potential risks:

Unmanaged anxiety can escalate into long-term insecurity, fear, or school refusal.

Recommendation:

Prepare children gradually for separations, create goodbye routines, and reassure them of your return. Build confidence step by step

Chapter 6:
HEALTH & WELLNESS

Daily Life Decisions





Health Supplements for Kids – Sugar in Disguise?

Myth:

Children's health supplements are always safe and beneficial

Fact:

Many supplements marketed for kids contain high sugar, artificial flavors, and minimal nutritional value.

Potential risks:

Excess sugar intake, obesity risk, dental problems, and false reliance on supplements instead of real food.

Recommendation:

Check labels carefully, prioritize whole foods, and consult professionals before giving supplements. Good nutrition comes from balanced diets



Brushing Twice a Day – Is It Enough?

Myth:

Brushing twice a day is enough to ensure perfect dental health..

Fact:

Brushing is important, but what matters more is proper technique, cleaning after sticky or sugary foods, and flossing when needed. Twice a day is only effective if brushing is done correctly.

Potential risks:

Improper brushing can lead to enamel damage or leave behind food particles, causing cavities despite frequency. Children may also develop poor brushing habits if parents only focus on “how many times” rather than “how well.”

Recommendation:

Teach proper brushing techniques, supervise young children, and encourage brushing after sugary snacks, not just morning and night.



Early Bedtime Is Not Important If Kids Get Enough Sleep Hours

Myth:

As long as children get 8–10 hours of sleep, it doesn't matter when they go to bed.

Fact:

The timing of sleep is just as important as the number of hours. Growth hormones, memory consolidation, and emotional regulation work best with early, consistent bedtimes aligned to the body's natural rhythms.

Potential risks:

- Poor concentration and irritability.
- Weak immune system despite “enough hours” of sleep.
- Increased screen use late at night, affecting brain health.
- Long-term disruption of healthy routines.

Recommendation:

Maintain a consistent bedtime routine that aligns with natural circadian rhythms (ideally before 9:30 pm). Encourage calming activities like reading or quiet play before bed to improve both quality and quantity of sleep.



Skipping Breakfast Doesn't Affect Children Much

Myth:

Breakfast isn't important — children can “make up” for it later in the day.

Fact:

Breakfast fuels the brain and body after long overnight fasting. Skipping it impacts focus, learning ability, and mood regulation in school-going children.

Potential risks:

- Poor attention span in class.
- Low energy and irritability in the mornings.
- Overeating junk food later in the day.
- Nutritional imbalances over time.

Recommendation:

Prioritize a balanced breakfast with protein, fiber, and healthy fats. Even simple options like milk with fruits, eggs, or whole grains make a difference to morning focus and energy.



Junk Food in Moderation Has No Impact

Myth:

Occasional junk food won't harm children's health.

Fact:

Even small, regular servings of junk food condition taste buds to prefer salty, sweet, or oily foods. Over time, this preference affects eating habits, increases cravings, and reduces acceptance of natural, healthy foods.

Potential risks:

Nutritional deficiencies from reduced intake of real foods.
Early risk of obesity, high blood pressure, or diabetes.
Long-term unhealthy food preferences.

Recommendation:

Reserve junk food for rare, special occasions and not as a "reward."
Offer healthier versions of snacks at home (baked, homemade, or fruit-based) so children develop natural taste for nutritious food.



Bigger Appetites Mean Healthier Children

Myth:

Children who eat a lot are healthier and stronger

Fact:

Health depends on balanced nutrition, not the volume of food consumed. Overeating, even of “healthy” foods, can strain digestion and lead to unhealthy weight gain.

Potential risks:

Overfeeding may cause bloating, discomfort, or obesity. Children may ignore natural hunger and fullness cues. Parents may overlook nutritional quality in favor of quantity.

Recommendation:

Encourage mindful eating and respect a child’s natural hunger signals. Focus on diversity and balance in meals rather than pushing for large quantities.



Final Thoughts

Parenting is a journey filled with love, learning, and constant adaptation. While it's easy to lean on tradition, trends, or quick fixes, true growth comes from staying curious and open to change.

By questioning old practices, replacing myths with mindful choices, and focusing on our children's long-term well-being, we give them the gift of a stronger foundation for life.

As you reflect on these parenting practices, remember — there is no perfect parent, only intentional ones who are willing to pause, rethink, and evolve. Small shifts in our approach today can create lasting positive impacts on our children's tomorrow. ✨

This week, pick just one small shift from what you've read and try it at home — and if it helps, share the idea with another parent. Together, we can create a healthier, more thoughtful parenting culture.



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