

# Raising No-Compromise Kids

adapted by Phyllis Meshel Onest

## **Dedicate each of your children to the Lord.**

Although we dedicated our children to God when we had them baptized, it doesn't stop there. It is important to begin each day by bringing each child before the Lord in prayer. Our children are a gift from God and are on loan to us to rear as Orthodox Christians. God is there to lead the way if only we work with Him.

## **Teach them the ways of Christ as given us in the Scriptures and Tradition of the Church.**

This is the "reap what you sow" principle. If we don't put it in, we won't get it back out. Scripture and Tradition form the standards for our lives as Orthodox Christians. Insist that family members play by "God's rules".

## **Communicate, communicate, communicate!**

"**Ephesians 6:4** tells us to 'bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord'. *Admonish* means to warn and caution; to reprove mildly; to advise; to inform or remind, by way of a warning. When a loving parent admonishes in a nurturing way, the lasting effect is positive."Psychologists state that during all our adult lives, our parents' opinions circulate like tape recordings in our minds. Most often the 'experts' mean that this is the cause of many of our dysfunctions. But why can't these 'parental recordings' be a constructive thing?"

## **Listen to them.**

We need to be "sounding boards" for our children. They need us to be available so they can bounce off things that happen at school. This is a perfect time to share your values - values often in opposition to the "world's". The Scriptures teach that we are to be "in the world" but not "of the world".

## **Support them.**

We know that kids seek support somewhere, oftentimes from their peers. The ideal is that they experience affirmations from their parents and family, including god-families. What we want them to know is that regardless of how they are perceived by others, at home they are loved and accepted.

## **Make knowing Christ and developing His character your family's goals.**

We have the life of Christ and the lives of the saints, who succeeded in living as Christ would have wanted, as examples for our children and us. Encourage children to learn the lives of their patron saints so that they have real heroes/heroines to emulate.

## **Pray, pray, pray!**

When we come to God on behalf of our children, something supernatural happens to them and to us. They are protected and we acknowledge our dependence on Him. Our prayers can be done during a specific prayer time or throughout the day as He brings the individual child to mind.

## **Be an example.**

How we conduct our lives at work, at church, and at home are the most effective tools we have to reinforce what we teach. Even though raising no-compromising children is a challenge, it is something we will never regret.

*Adapted from an article with the same name by Cynthia Culp Allen that appeared in **Focus on the Family** magazine, August 1995, p.10.*

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