

Most Americans Say Children Today Need More Discipline

The American Family Survey recently released a [new report](#) on American attitudes toward children, family, and marriage.

When asked to name the biggest issue American families face, respondents did not pick economic related issues, such as a lack of jobs or high cost of living, nor did they pick cultural issues, such as the increase of drugs, alcohol, and sex.

Instead, over half of the respondents declared that “parents not teaching or disciplining their children sufficiently” is one of the most important problems with which families are dealing.

Table 16: The Most Important Problems

	% selected as one of three items
Economics	
The costs associated with raising a family	26
High work demands and stress on parents	21
The lack of good jobs	19
Lack of government programs to support families	8
Culture	
The widespread availability and use of drugs and alcohol	27
Sexual permissiveness in our society	25
Decline in religious faith and church attendance	23
Crime and other threats to personal safety	19
Family Structure and Stability	
Parents not teaching or disciplining their children sufficiently	53
More children growing up in single-parent homes	25
Difficulty finding quality time with family in the digital age	21
Change in the definition of marriage and family	16

Note: Cell entries indicate the percentage of the sample selecting that item as one of the “most important issues facing families today.”

Judging from this survey, it would seem that many Americans are suffering from what John Locke calls “the great mistake” in parenting:

“The great mistake I have observed in people’s breeding their children has been, that this has not been taken care enough of in its due season; that the mind has not been made obedient to discipline, and pliant to reason, when at first it was most tender, most easy to be bowed. ...

Thus parents, by humouring and cockering them when little, corrupt the principles of nature in their children, and wonder afterwards to taste the bitter waters, when they themselves have poisoned the fountain. For when their children are grown up, and these ill habits with them; when they are now too big to be dandled, and their parents can no longer make use of them as playthings; then they complain, that the brats are untoward and perverse; then they are offended to see them wilful, and are troubled with those ill humours, which they themselves infused and fomented in them; and then, perhaps too late, would be glad to get out those weeds which their own hands have planted, and which now have taken too deep root to be easily extirpated.”

For a number of years, society has encouraged parents to be sensitive to their children’s psychological and physical needs, always encouraging and never speaking or doing anything which might damage a child’s self-esteem. But in doing so, have many parents allowed the weeds to get out of hand, and unwittingly encouraged their children to be demanding, self-centered individuals? Do we need to encourage parents to once again be more vigilant about weeding out the faults in their children’s lives through appropriate discipline and careful training?

—

Dear Readers,

Big Tech is suppressing our reach, refusing to let us advertise and squelching our ability to serve up a steady diet of truth and ideas. Help us fight back by [becoming a member](#) for just \$5 a month and then join the discussion on Parler [@CharlemagneInstitute!](#)

Image Credit: BabyL!ke