Parent`s Influence Essay, Research Paper

Influence is a word that can explain many things in today`s world. Influence

explains why people do the things they do. A child`s influence on how he/she

perceives life will stay with them for the rest of his/her life. But a more

important question to ask is where does that influence come. Does it come from

the parents of that child or does it come from that child`s peer group. Although

children are influenced from the outside world, ultimately a child learns right

from wrong, good from bad, love and caring from their parents. I hope to prove

to you, the reader, that influence, does in fact, come from the parents more

than what people think. First, we must talk about the influence that comes

genetically. The parents DNA already have influenced a child from birth. The

child can be shy, outgoing, perceptive, or absent-minded, but those

characteristics will be shown later in the child`s lifetime. If you look at a

family, you can tell what types of characteristics the children have. Then you

can ask the parents who in their family have those same traits. I am sure that

the parents can think of someone in their family, if not them self, to answer

that question. What about the influence a child receives after birth, if any,

from their parents. Right after birth takes place, the mother typically shows

the child love by holding the baby, kissing it, singing it to bed, etc. Showing

a child love from the day the child is born and continuously throughout

childhood, will have a better positive effect on the child later in their own

life. Judith Rich Harris, in her book The Nurture Assumption: Why Children Turn

Out the Way They Do; Parents Matter Less The You Think and Peers Matter More

believes that the love a parent gives has no effect on the child later in life.

So far, to this day, studies show that if a parent show love and support towards

their child, that child becomes less aggressive says John Gottman of the

University of Washington. To quote Rosie O`Donnell in the Newsweek article, The

Parent Trap, of September 7, 1998 on page 58, You`re born with a personality

that`s defined by the tenderness, love, support, and care you`re give. She also

goes on to say, Children could just be born and put in day care and become who

they are. But that negates the value of love. O`Donnell believes that the love a

parent gives to their child is the foundation of that child`s personality. Her

thoughts along with other scientists, parents, and young adults around the world

suggest that parents do influence the children of today. Another influence that

parents have on their children is the teaching of right from wrong. Parents

teach their kids that stealing is bad or hurting another person is wrong.

Parents also teach their children that helping another person is the right thing

to do. It is from this concept, that children develop a more in depth conscious.

If a person of any age does something wrong or thinks about doing something

wrong (i.e. stealing), that person will think of the consequences that go along

with that crime. Most people won`t commit the crime because their parents

influenced them that stealing is bad. Some people will go commit the crime, but

if you ask the thief of what their childhood was like, they would probably say

that they had no parents to guide them. So that would lead to society bringing

up a child to fend for himself. Another influence that parents give their

children is the distinction of good and bad. This is somewhat similar to right

from wrong; it is just a little different. There are no severe consequences that

come along with these actions. A parent will praise their child for obtaining

good grades in school or doing chores around the house. Some parents, in order

to teach children good things, will give rewards (i.e. money, toys, etc.) for

any action to the child as long as that action is good. A parent might punish a

child for doing something bad, such as getting a bad grade in school, or coming

home late at night. A parent will do this to help the child understand what they

did was wrong and not to do it again. Parents try to teach their children what

they should be doing later in life. Parents give their children guidance and

prepare them for adulthood. Some people will argue against that point. People

might argue that children entering young adulthood make choices due to their

friends and/or society. At this point in a child`s life, there are many choices

that one must make. Who to be friends with; How do I dress today?; Do I find

myself attracted to that boy/girl? A child will base their answers on what they

feel. That child`s parents have helped them gain knowledge in all those areas

whether it was subliminal or not. Other peers might influence a child to a

certain extent, but those peers cannot change what a parent has taught for the

past 10 years or more. Once that child becomes and adult, he/she will understand

then why parents have done the things they have. The parents have done these

things to set values their child`s life and have those values continue on

through adulthood. Michael Jordan describes this best by saying, I know that no

one has had a greater impact on me than my parents. Their ethics and morals are

my ethics and morals. It`s funny, but you don`t realize how much they mold you

until you get older and begin to see them in the things that you do (Newsweek,

9/7/98, p.58) Parents will have an everlasting effect on their children no

matter what. If the parent was good then the child will turn out to be a good

adult. If the parent is bad, probably the child will turn out to be just like

their parents but you never known. Maybe society had a positive effect on that

child`s life. All a person can say is that what a parents does to influence a

child will never be forgotten.