The Misuse Of Power Essay, Research Paper

The Misuse of Power

If a person hears the word power, he/she would probably think of the power of the Presidency of the Unites States, the power of a Supreme Court Justice, the power of a CEO of a major corporation, or even the power of a police officer. All of these positions are excellent examples of power, but there is no greater power than the power of a parent over a child. How a parent chooses to utilize their power over the rearing of their child will directly affect that child in many ways.

The first day a parent brings home a new born baby from the hospital is that child’s first and earliest exposure to how its parent will handle the power of parenthood over a child’s life. That baby is hungry or wet and cries for its needs to be met. The parent is watching a favorite television show, and allows the baby to cry until the show is over. That is the beginning of parental misuse of power. The child is now a toddler, wants to stick a fork in an electric light socket. The parent spanks the child, telling it no, and places the child in time-out. A child of toddler age is naturally curious, wanting to stick things in an electric light socket and it is age appropriate. Spanking the child is punitive and does not teach the child that the parent is concerned for their safety. Teaching the child in a simple way, and re-directing its attention to another area of curious interest that is safe is a better way of using parental power. As a child grows and experiences life situations a parent who teaches, rather than mandates with an explanation of “because I said so” will have positive responses from the child. The word discipline means to “teach”; yet when most of my friends hear the word discipline I believe that they think of it as a negative uncomfortable experience of life. Parents who discipline punitively will have a rebellious child. Parents, who are more in a position of teacher or mentor coming from concern, not control will have a child who responds positively. Parents who misuse parental power by trying to control their children will only meet with rebellion or passive/aggressive devious children. Trusting a child to have good judgment after parenting with love, concern, and safety should result with a child whom a parent can trust to make good judgments. Realistic goals will result in realistic accomplishments.

Parents utilize parental power in many different ways. My own life’s observations of my friend’s and family’s interactions with their parents support my premise that puberty and parenting will be a lot smoother if there is no misuse of parental power from the first day.