

Parenting to Insure Launch

by Michael Rebel, LMHC #MH3532

reprinted from the Kids Enquirer, Family Resource Guide

There has been a recent awareness about an emerging problem in the final stages of parenting, the failure of young adults from 21 years old to 35 years old to establish their own homes. They have quite literally failed to be weaned. The recent movie FAILURE TO LAUNCH has brought the problem into public awareness.

I know that most of you reading this article have small children and believe this will never happen to you. However, some predictions indicate that as many as one third of the graduates of 2006 will return to live at home by the time they are 30 years old. I have approximately one new family per week trying to solve this problem at my practice.

There are many underlying problems causing this phenomenon. One of several of these might influence each circumstance. It is important to understand that your children will have a life of their own some day. In order to have a lifelong understand that their life is their's it is essential to re-enforce the future prospects. Here are some of the factors that I have encountered:

Semantics. Telling them that your house is their house instead of letting them know that their home is YOUR house. This is a verbal contract, do you plan to honor it?

Promises. Telling them that they can always live there instead of saying that they are welcome to live there until they become an adult. It would be good to let them know that there are binding conditions.

Illusions. Letting them believe that your community/financial status is their status. It is hard to get an affluent youth to accept an entry-entry job. Royal children are extensively trained to handle this problem.

Guilt. Supporting them when they should be providing for themselves because affluent parents can't stand seeing their children have to struggle to succeed. It is hard for them to say "no" to the easy way out and take the path that will strengthen their self-image and build character. Remember, most adults see their early days as the most fun and the most rewarding.

Poor Information. Taking "care" of children instead of "parenting" them. Parenting doesn't protect from problems effectively. Children must learn how good it feels to solve a problem and build self esteem.

Development Process. The young adult is waiting for the parents to help them leave and the parents are waiting for their child to leave. Weaning is a parenting process not a developmental process. Traditionally, it is usually the father's job to make sure they leave when it is time.

There re many more possible factors. I hope these help you get the gist of the process. This will not effect all children but the one's that are effected have serious problems to remedy later in life.

Enjoy your children and give them room to grow.