# **Signs of Bad Parenting**

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Does bad parenting really exist? It seems to be a myth to most parents because parents do not want anything bad for their kids. Unfortunately, bad parenting exists. Parents sometimes indulge in detrimental parenting, leaving a long-lasting effect on the child. It could be unintentional, but the damage is done. No matter how hard you try to fix things, you meet with little success making you wonder “Am I a bad parent?”

You may not realize your moments of bad parenting. Therefore, this MomJunction post makes it comprehensible. Keep reading to learn all about bad parenting, the signs of it, and the ways you can be a better parent.

## **WHAT IS BAD PARENTING?**

The definition of bad parenting is not a single act of poor nurturing but rather a series of such actions that invariably harm the little one’s demeanor and psychology. A parent may feel guilty and will try to reconcile, but it often yields poor results.

Unsurprisingly, many parents do not realize their folly since the deed was unintentional or perhaps they are too busy to learn to be an active parent. Some parents are not prepared for a worst-case scenario, while a segment does not care enough. These attributes and actions all sum up to refer to bad parenting skills.

## **WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF BAD PARENTING?**

Several parenting incidences point towards being a bad parent. Here are some unintentional things you could be doing to fit the label of being a bad mother or father:

### **1. THE CHILD IS REPRIMANDED EVEN IF HE SPOKE THE TRUTH:**

The child did something wrong and acknowledged it, nevertheless, you scold him for committing a mistake. And you have forgotten that he was courageous enough to be truthful.

### **2. YOU SCOLD, PUNISH AND HIT THE CHILD IN FRONT OF EVERYONE:**

There is no hesitation in castigating the little one irrespective of the place and the people. You scold him in front of his siblings, grandparents, cousins, and even the neighbors. You even whip a slap or two.

### **3. MORE ADVICE, LESS ENCOURAGEMENT:**

All you do is tell him how to do things (“You should wake up early for better grades.”) rather than encourage him with positive words (“You are far intelligent dear. I’ll help you wake up early to get better grades.”)

### **4. NOT DISPLAYING ADEQUATE AFFECTION:**

Ever wondered why your child is always trying to get your attention by troubling you with naughty tricks? It is quite likely that he feels a lack of emotional connect and warmth from his parents.

### **5. NOT SUPPORTIVE WHEN HE NEEDS YOU THE MOST:**

It could be your child’s school examination time when he needs a lot of support from you. But you focus on your official work or another commitment, which makes the child feel neglected.

### **6. THERE IS ALWAYS A COMPARISON TO SOMEONE ELSE:**

It is good to set positive role models for your child but always comparing him with someone, especially a sibling or the child next door, is a sign of bad parenting.

### **7. NEVER PROUD OF THE ACHIEVEMENTS:**

You express no excitement or joy when your kid comes home beaming with pride about his win in a contest. In fact, there have been few instances of pride in your parenthood.

### **8. ALWAYS HAVING A CRITICIZING TONE:**

You see everything the child does in a negative light, and are always critical of him. This is different from not appreciating something since there you are indifferent, but here you just disapprove everything.

### **9. MAKE NO EFFORTS IN UNDERSTANDING AND RESPECTING THE FEELINGS:**

You may spend a lot of time in teaching good things but never spare a moment to understand the little one’s opinion and feelings. Every time he shares something, you rule it out as gibberish and do not take it seriously.

### **10. NOT SHOWING THE RIGHT WAY OF DOING THINGS:**

It is not just about showing the path but also walking with the child for the first few steps. Investing more in actions than words is important.

### **11. SETTING POOR EXAMPLES:**

Children learn habits, whether good or bad, from their parents. If the child does something wrong and inappropriate, then spare a moment to introspect for he may have learnt it from you.

### **12. THE CHILD IS NEVER OFFERED A CHOICE:**

Parents decide everything for their children, from the school they study to the clothes they wear. In this process, you tend to get rigid to the point that you forget to give a choice to the child. That makes the child yearn for other things, and in some cases, he will not hesitate even to steal it.

### **13. PAMPERING TO THE POINT THE CHILD BECOMES ARROGANT:**

It’s nice to shower attention and materialistic love but not so much that the child becomes a spoilt brat. He takes everything for granted and does not understand the value of anything. It makes him pretentious, which can lead to the formation of a negative social image.

### **14. HELP SOLVE EVEN THE SMALLEST PROBLEMS:**

It is good to hold the hand but not to the point that the child is unable to do anything on his own. This results in low self-confidence and self-esteem.
Along with these signs of bad parenting, there are also certain habits that make you a bad parent.

### **15. PHYSICALLY INTIMIDATE THE CHILD:**

You just raise your hand, or worse, show a fist every time your child does something wrong. Intimidation has become your primary tool to discipline your child, irrespective of the mental or physical impact it has on him. Cultivating a fear towards you to control the child is tantamount to bullying, which is quite a pathetic thing.

### **16. GIVING SHORT, GRUMPY ANSWERS:**

A child needs guidance through wise and comforting words, but instead, you choose to respond in terse replies that leave the child bewildered yet also disappointed. He may approach you multiple times to get an appropriate reaction, but you continue to be stubborn.

Bad parenting can have a lasting impact on the child, and often the damage is irreversible.

## **HOW DOES BAD PARENTING AFFECT A CHILD?**

The consequences of bad parenting are serious and may have long-term repercussions. Here are the adverse effects of bad parenting on a child:

1. **Lack of empathy towards other:** Children behave with others the way their parents treat them. If a child is treated with indifference at home, then it is quite likely he will display similar emotion at school and elsewhere. Such children eventually develop apathy towards other human beings.
2. **Have trouble establishing lasting friendship and relationship:** It can happen due to low self-confidence or brash behavior, both that would have arisen from authoritarian parenting style. Studies have shown that when parents do not invest emotionally in their children, the child can subsequently develop problems regulating emotions and is unable to interact with others.
3. **Development of anxiety and depression:** Research has shown that children who experience bad parenting during their childhood are at a greater risk of developing anxiety and depression as adults. Your bad parenting today can affect the child’s mindset, making him a bad parent later in life.
4. **Psychological disorders:** When you are at the extreme of being a bad parent then the child can develop severe mental disorders that may take years to cure or never rectify at all. Such children tend to become social misfits as they step into adulthood. It dims their opportunity to be an integral part of the society, eventually making them an outcast.
5. **Point to remember:** There is a misconception that bad parenting leads to autism in children. Autistic children need a different kind of parenting style but are certainly not the result of poor or bad parenting.
6. **Criminal behavior:** Some parents indulge in corporal punishment since they believe it is the only way of dealing with naughty children. However, repeated use of physical reprehension can make the child think it is okay to strike someone for any reason. As the child steps into adulthood, this belief transforms into an immoral inclination to cause deliberate harm to others.

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## **HOW TO BE A BETTER PARENT?**

It is never too late to change your parenting style, and here are some tips on being a better parent:

### **1. HAVE HANDS-ON INVOLVEMENT IN PARENTING:**

You are not just the guardian of the child but also someone who teaches essential life lessons. Go beyond the provisionary creature comforts, and strike an emotional rapport. Focus on a relationship that has control, but not at the cost of love, so that the child has a healthy upbringing.

### **2. REFRAIN FROM YELLING AND STRIKING THE CHILD:**

Children can be difficult with their tendency to be naughty. It is quite likely you lose patience and yell, which can leave the child wailing and upset. Some parents have few qualms at slapping their child even if it is in front of relatives or even strangers. That makes you bad parents. You may feel sorry for it later, but the damage would have been done.

Learn to control the child’s naughty outbursts in a more reasonable manner. For example, if he breaks a sibling’s toy, then take away his favorite toy and say he gets it only when he apologizes and promises never to do it again. Once he does so, you must explain to him why his actions were wrong, and how he must never damage someone else’s belongings.

### **3. GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR INSTRUCTIONS:**

A child will not understand the underlying purpose behind an instruction like “Sleep on time at night.” As a parent, it is your duty to elaborate the reasons in a manner the kid understands. Do not say things like “Because I say so!” or “Do not ask questions, just go to bed!” That sets a wrong precedent, and children have a natural tendency to oppose things they do not understand.

### **4. SET RULES AFTER DISCUSSION:**

If you set some new rules, then have a word with the child before implementing them. That way, he is a part of the proceedings and is aware that he is not supposed to do some things. Having discussions with the child make him feel important, and can boost his self-esteem. He will also be in charge for his actions and will hesitate from doing something wrong.

### **5. LET THE CHILD HAVE SOME CHOICE:**

Ask for an opinion before deciding something for the child. It is more applicable for adolescents, who may feel irked when no one asks their preference before taking a decision for them. For example, instead of jumping to a conclusion, “You need a new tuition. I will get it changed tomorrow”, you can say, “I don’t think this tuition is working out well. Shall we get it changed tomorrow?” It is an excellent way to teach the child decision-making, and invariably introduce him to the concept of being responsible.

### **6. LISTEN WHEN HE SAYS SOMETHING:**

Good parenting is also about listening to your child with rapt attention when he has something to share. It includes his mundane narrative of the day and all his achievements, which all seem trivial but could mean a lot to the child. Do not brush aside his words to hear them another day or override it with something else like “I will listen to you later, first get your room cleaned!” That is disheartening, and although it is just a child, he does sense that you just behaved with him rudely.
Appreciate your little one when he is truthful and honest. Children who are reprimanded for speaking the truth may eventually prefer a lie to save their skin.

### **7. SET GOOD EXAMPLES:**

An action can talk louder than words, and it is perhaps the best way to make your child understand the importance of something. You set a positive example by practicing something that you always ask your child to do. Children learn healthy habits from parents and are less likely to adopt bad ones when their parents themselves refrain from it.

Remember, bad parenting is your flaw, and it is your responsibility to bring a change. Good parenting is important for a holistic development of the child, while also enabling him to reap its benefits for the rest of his life.