



## Sustainable Parenting?

### Consider the Longer Term Impact of your Parenting Choices

Are our current parenting styles and choices creating sustainable health and wellbeing of our children, future generations, society and the human race?  
Or are they more about convenience, saving time and / or making money?

Here are just some choices to ponder....

#### Medicalised Intervention at Birth

Over 95% of Australian women birth in a hospital. But is birth a medical event? NO Babies and mothers receive important physical, mental, emotional and spiritual stimulation from a natural birth process. **Research shows** (and the World Health Organisation suggests) that medical intervention at birth is often not necessary and only used due to 'hospital policy' based on fear of litigation. A natural birth process would be more likely for many women if they received independent education and support regarding the birth process. There are many and varied options available to provide women with a gentle, natural or empowered birth process to benefit both mother and baby.

#### Children being 'raised' by strangers

**Research shows** that babies need a strong, loving bond with at least one significant carer to develop physically, mentally and emotionally. The quality, strength and duration of this bond affect the long term health of the child. Children placed in child care at an early age and for a large duration of their days / weeks will not have the same benefit of a child who predominantly is cared for by a mother / father or family member.

#### Formula feeding instead of breastfeeding

**Research shows** the best nutrition for babies is breastfeeding. Breastfeeding rates are falling as many mothers do not receive appropriate encouragement and support to breastfeed or cannot breastfeed successfully due to a highly medicalised birth. Babies raised on formula only or with minimal breastfeeding will not receive the benefits of breast milk to build a strong immune system. Breastfeeding also builds a strong emotional bond between mother and baby.



## Early medications (Panadol, anti-biotics etc)

Are children's under developed immune systems being supported by medications? NO

Early medications may appear helpful as the child may stop screaming or symptoms of disease may lessen, however the unseen damage is the depletion of their immune system. Children's bodies are naturally designed to fight off illness and disease by fever and other symptoms.

**Research shows** that when we tamper with nature by not allowing the body to do it's work unhindered we are robbing their bodies of crucial learning. Later in life these children are often more prone to sickness or develop allergies. Prescription drugging of children such as with children with ADHD is un-necessary and again intervenes with the child's normal body functions instead of supporting it. Such drugs do nothing to prevent the actual cause of the problem and also have short and long term side affects.

## Vaccinations

Vaccines are highly toxic chemical mixes that bypass our natural immune systems.

Vaccines are now first introduced to babies one day old and then babies, toddlers and children receive many multiple doses before age seven.

Does this really strengthen their natural immune system.....? NO

**Research shows** possible short and long term adverse health and developmental affects of vaccinations.

## Convenience Food - Low nutrition / High rates of Chemicals, additives in foods

Foods today are no reflection on those from 50 or 100 years ago. Even the most conscientious of families eat foods regularly that have large numbers of artificial additives and low rates of nutrition. Even so called healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables are now much lower in nutrition due to nutrient levels in our soils being depleted through over farming and are high in chemicals from the sprays used during farming. We must ensure we provide our children with wide variety of the freshest food available to us, organically grown where possible to give them the fuel their body and brain needs to grow into healthy adults, not just empty calories laden with toxins.

**Research shows** that our children are suffering health problems such as obesity, allergies and behavioural problems and many of these are linked to poor diet / nutrition.



## Chemicals in our environment

Are the convenience products of our modern society safe? **Research shows no.** Our homes and environments are now a chemical cocktail that we take in with each breath. From household cleaners to shampoos, deodorants, perfumes, room deodorisers, laundry powder and many, many more. All filled with a myriad of toxins to make them cheap and effective. All un-necessary. All of these are available in chemical free, non toxic, low allergy formulas. Natural alternatives are better for your family, the environment and often more effective.

## Early 'education'

Let kids be kids and play! **Research shows** that our bodies are naturally designed to learn by instinct. Children under the age of seven learn through observing, mimicking, modelling and active play. Education that requires children under the age of seven to sit and be instructed academically (e.g. numbers, reading, writing, music etc) is not suited to the way the brain develops at this age. Early education of this nature can actually impede their long term intellectual development, including creativity as well as their love of learning. Children will not be academically disadvantaged long term, quite the opposite. Creative and imaginative play will prepare your child for future learning through positive early brain development.

## High rates of TV / Computer usage

Computers and television did not exist for children 50 years ago and are now a large part of the day for most children, teenagers and even toddlers. **Research shows** that the brain is more active sleeping than it is watching television. For babies and toddlers watching television has significant impacts as it actually impedes the early brain development. Babies, toddlers and children learn and develop through active body movement. Television time starts a habit for the brain of 'switching off' instead of actively developing. Television and computer games encourage competition, violence, eating junk food, buying items and overall laziness through inactivity.

## Conscious Parenting

To raise 'good' children we need to 'teach' them to say please and thankyou, to give them time out when they 'misbehave' and to constantly praise or correct them. Or don't we? **Research shows NO.** Parenting is about providing safety, structure, encouragement and boundaries, based on love, for children to feel loved and nurtured so that their inner soul may thrive. Children gain far more from parents who are aware of their developmental stages and who model behaviour accordingly. There is no such thing as bad children or bad behaviour – just parents who lack understanding! Parents who stop focusing on changing their child's behaviour and focus on changing their own behaviour have a greater chance of being a happy parent and raising a happy child.



## Our children grow from our choices

Our children are developing due to, and from, (and sometimes in spite of) our parenting choices. Currently that growth includes society trends such as massive increases in:

- Youth depression and suicide
- Youth violence and crime
- Drug experimentation and use
- Obesity, allergies, asthma etc
- Behavioural problems such as ADHD, Autism

## Children learn from our example

Our children are learning from our parenting choices. They may be learning that

- Using drugs is O.K – drugs and medicines are safe
- Medical intervention is better than prevention
- Watching others on television is easier / better than participating in life
- Education is sometimes unfriendly, impersonal, competitive
- Eating junk food is O.K – you don't have to look after yourself as you can always go to the doctor (on Medicare) when you get sick
- Work is more important than looking after (being with) children
- Saving time and money is more important than health
- Do as I say, not as I do

## What do you want for your children?

Think about what you want for your children's future. Do you want them to be wealthy and be the President of a company? Or is it more likely that you want them to be:

- Physically and mentally healthy
- Self confident
- Respectful and trusting
- Loving and giving to others (and forgiving)
- Filled with joy and appreciation
- Responsible and reliable
- Careful and caring for the planet
- Self reliant, independent and connected within their community
- Happy and excited about what life has to offer.....?

**Now think about what they may want for themselves.....?**

**How can you take small steps forward each day to assist in creating this outcome for your children.....?**



## References

I have not included individual references in each section above as there are just so many possible examples (articles, books, research, speakers etc) to support the questions and suggestions I have included.

But here are some website starting points if you are interested to learn more about parenting choices. Investigate. Research. Read. Discuss. Consider your options and make choices that you are confident will meet your immediate needs as well as being supportive to the short and long term health, and happiness, of your child.

<b>Australian Web Links</b>	<b>International Web Links</b>
<a href="http://www.futurefamilies.com.au">www.futurefamilies.com.au</a>	<a href="http://www.atlc.org">www.atlc.org</a>
<a href="http://www.sabirthmatters.org.au">www.sabirthmatters.org.au</a>	<a href="http://www.connectionparenting.com">www.connectionparenting.com</a>
<a href="http://www.homebirthsa.org.au">www.homebirthsa.org.au</a>	<a href="http://www.unconditionalparenting.com">www.unconditionalparenting.com</a>
<a href="http://www.visainfo.org.au">www.visainfo.org.au</a>	<a href="http://www.consciouslyparenting.com">www.consciouslyparenting.com</a>
<a href="http://www.nourishingaustralia.com.au">www.nourishingaustralia.com.au</a>	<a href="http://www.joyfullyrejoicing.com">www.joyfullyrejoicing.com</a>
<a href="http://www.avn.org.au">www.avn.org.au</a>	<a href="http://www.handinhandparenting.org">www.handinhandparenting.org</a>
<a href="http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au">www.breastfeeding.asn.au</a>	<a href="http://www.childfriendly.org">www.childfriendly.org</a>
<a href="http://www.naturalparenting.com.au">www.naturalparenting.com.au</a>	<a href="http://www.naturalchild.org">www.naturalchild.org</a>
<a href="http://www.kindredmedia.com.au">www.kindredmedia.com.au</a>	<a href="http://www.familiesfornaturalliving.org">www.familiesfornaturalliving.org</a>
<a href="http://www.parental-intelligence.com">www.parental-intelligence.com</a>	<a href="http://www.EnjoyParenting.com">www.EnjoyParenting.com</a>
<a href="http://www.louiseporter.com.au">www.louiseporter.com.au</a>	<a href="http://www.attachmentparenting.org">www.attachmentparenting.org</a>
<a href="http://www.our-emotional-health.com">www.our-emotional-health.com</a>	<a href="http://www.youandyourchildshealth.org">www.youandyourchildshealth.org</a>
<a href="http://www.compsafe.com.au">www.compsafe.com.au</a>	
<a href="http://www.hea.asn.au">www.hea.asn.au</a>	
<a href="http://www.steiner-australia.org">www.steiner-australia.org</a>	
<a href="http://www.aaaa.net.au">www.aaaa.net.au</a>	
<a href="http://www.kinesiology.nu/ankoelman">www.kinesiology.nu/ankoelman</a>	

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Gentle Birthing, Conscious Parenting, Natural Health & Wellness, Chemical Free Living

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