



**Institute of Sathya Sai Education Australia**

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## **CONTEMPORARY PARENTING ISSUES UNDERLINE THE NEED FOR HUMAN VALUES IN FAMILY DYNAMICS**

**Sai Ram**

My humble pranams to our guru Sathya Sai Baba

Dear Brothers & Sisters

The world we live in has become a much more complex place than it was just a generation ago. Little is known about how Australian parents view their parenting role once their children become adults. That is to say that we do not have the time to reflect what parents are doing as we are “Time poor.” We know in general that relationships between parents and their children change considerably over the life span. From Nurturers → Teachers → Friends → Advisers.

Underpinning this change is a shift in the way parents and young people view each other. Let me highlight two main issues

1. **Helicopter Parenting** –right from the time our children wake up, parents focuses on everything the child has to do, when to do them, how to do them (illustrate an eg). This is done for the first 10 yrs of a child’s life
2. **Parents Expectation** – children grow up thinking that they have to lead a life based on their parent’s expectation

Parents think that they are doing the right thing and find it difficult to accept when their children grow up and rebel.

The digital world has enhanced our lives by way of “instant” communication. We marvel being able to communicate with people around the world at any hour. Yet we are encountering great difficulties raising our children e.g.:

**Numeracy** –relate the story of McDonald’s –chicken nuggets.

Customer: asks for half dozen

Server: Sorry “Sir”, we do not have half a dozen, but we sell only 3, 6 or 12.

**Literacy** –words are misspelt and messages are abbreviated

Mobile phone has become part of our life-everyone is walking with one eye on the footpath and the other on their phone (for messages, reminder, alarms, etc) or little devices where they used to wear a watch

It is evident that technology is making children cleverer but at the same time it is full of both, appropriate and inappropriate information absorbed at an early age. Imagine if your fridge knows how much food it has at any given time and can then communicate directly to your grocery store and organise a delivery for the time when it knows you will be there. That is our children's future wish.

This technology and devices are having a profound impact on a child's mental and emotional development which is being affected because of the mixed signals they receive from parents and society.

We need to bring an awareness of the Human values in young parents and the children. Not only that, we need to resource and equip parents with skills and strategies so that they can bring out the values latent in children. We have a moral responsibility to help children integrate values, culture and education through parenting practices in **this ever changing world. This was re-iterated as one of the key factors by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, David Cameron** after the recent London violence. The London violence is a wakeup call for all governments around the world to address the "fatherless society" issue that is being created as a result of "gay marriages", "single mothers" etc.

In addition we are faced with numerous other problems such as:

- Cyber bullying
- Drugs
- Binge Drinking
- Gay marriages
- Misuse of internet and the list goes on....

These problems can be addressed.

Ideally parents should be endowed with skills to learn to accept the changing relationship with their son or daughter – from that of a dependent child to an autonomous individual.

The young people should be given the knowledge and skills to learn to see their parents as unique beings, with their own life histories, needs and shortcomings.

The underlying basis of acceptance and a harmonious relationship on both sides are the core teachings of Sathya Sai Baba, of the five Human Values of Love, Peace, Truth, Right Conduct and Non violence given through family dynamics.

The Education in Human Values for Parents program developed by Dr Pal & Tehseen Dhall connects the five human values to the family dynamics. These are;

- **Family Time** –creates Peace in the family
- **Empowerment** –teaches the Right Conduct among children
- **Spouse Bond** – Love –foundation of healthy relationship
- **Positive Communication** –teaches Non-Violence
- **Connectivity of Religion, Relatives & Ritual** –practising of Truth

In addition the program provides the skills and strategies to handle situations and how we respond rather than react with our children.

We all have a wonderful opportunity to share Sai Baba's teachings with those who are less aware and also apply the five human values in our daily lives. These values are applicable to all irrespective of their ethnic background, financial or community status, culture, background etc.

God Bless you All.