

# Identifying Educational Values

In our last article, we established why it is important for parents to be on the same page about their family values and how those should be represented in their child's education. If parents are in disagreement about the educational values they represent as a family or the family and school are not aligned in their values, then the child will inevitably experience cognitive dissonance, which ultimately becomes an impediment to the child's learning. Whether you think you are on the same page with your partner regarding educational values or have already discovered that there is disagreement, this process should help you find common ground.

Let's first acknowledge that this is a difficult conversation to have. It's difficult because we care deeply about the topic of our children's futures. This is normal. This conversation is also difficult because it requires us to be vulnerable, to reveal our true intentions as parents, and to critically examine our own personal histories. So now that we have established the inherent difficulty in this conversation, let's set some basic ground rules.

1. No one is right and no one is wrong. Each person is entitled to his or her opinion. We will listen without judgment, in order to understand the other person's perspective as if it were our own.
2. Honesty is the best policy. It serves no one unless each person is being honest. Because we have established that what is said will be heard without judgment, let us not be afraid to say what we need to say.

\*We recommend downloading the questionnaire (see PDF attachment) and printing two copies if you have access to a printer. After finishing, open the next article for a guided exploration of your answers. Please do not share your answers with your partner until you have been invited to in the next section.

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On a scale of 1-5 (1 meaning "I completely disagree", 3 meaning "I don't have a strong opinion", and 5 meaning "I completely agree"), how much do you agree with the following statements?

- 1) I think children deserve to be treated with the same respect that is due to adults.

1      2      3      4      5

- 2) I think it is important for children to learn to be responsible for their own bodies, time management, objectives, working styles, environment, and actions.

1 2 3 4 5

- 3) I think risk-taking is important. I want my child to have the opportunity to take risks in the pursuit of knowledge.

1 2 3 4 5

- 4) I want my child to be an independent thinker, even if that means my child may not always conform to my worldview and opinions.

1 2 3 4 5

- 5) I think it's important that people follow their dreams, regardless of what those dreams are.

1 2 3 4 5

- 6) I think it is better to foster compassion for others than competition with others.

1 2 3 4 5

- 7) I think it's important that children learn how to stand up for their beliefs and advocate for their interests, even when that means breaking rules.

1 2 3 4 5

- 8) I think intellectual pursuits are important.

1 2 3 4 5

- 9) I think it is better to be able to teach yourself than to be able to learn from instruction.

1 2 3 4 5

- 10) I think people learn best from direct experience, not from being told about something abstractly.

1 2 3 4 5

- 11) I think that playing is a form of learning.

1 2 3 4 5

12) I think it's better to be self-disciplined than to be obedient.

1 2 3 4 5

13) When conflict arises in my family life, I think it is more important to find solutions to conflict than it is to determine who is at fault and what their punishment should be.

1 2 3 4 5

14) I think that happiness, health, and deep relationships are more valuable than wealth or prestige at the end of the day.

1 2 3 4 5

15) I think that children learn more from observing how adults behave than they do from what adults say.

1 2 3 4 5

16) I think it's more important that children spend quality time with their families than it is to do homework.

1 2 3 4 5