

The Incubator

Deuteronomy 11:18,19 Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Imagine a home where the parents yell at the children constantly. They call them names and tell them that they will never amount to anything. The children watch T.V. for hours on end and don't receive any educational or religious training. Pornography, alcohol, and marijuana are available to all of the children from the time that they can walk. The parents leave the children home alone for days on end and never tell them where they are going or when they will be back.

Do you think that would have an impact on those children? Undoubtedly. Yet on the other end of the spectrum, many parents question whether or not bringing a child up in a healthy Christian home will really make a significant difference. If one environment has the potential of utterly destroying a child's future, then shouldn't the opposite environment have the potential of equipping our children as spiritual champions?

Our home is an incubator. It is the best place for our children. Here they are safe from pornography, drugs, and alcohol. We protect them from unrestricted internet and T.V. Everything we read, watch and listen to is filtered. We protect them from lingerie catalogs, "swimsuit issues," and similar unwanted influences. In our home our kids are also safe from ideas that oppose God. Here they can be trained spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually. We can inoculate them to much of what the world has to offer. Our family provides a safe and loving atmo-

sphere where girls will become women, and boys will become men.

Our goal is not to keep them from the world forever. We are not trying to withdraw from the world, but to reach out to it. We want our kids to be world-changers. But for now they are in our incubator—growing, learning, maturing.

There are countless things we want to train our kids in, ranging from not standing up in the highchair to sharing their faith with their friends at school. The following articles will address several different areas of training, or ways of thinking about training that have been helpful to us.

The Invisible Parent (The Power of Instruction)

Have you ever wished that when your children go off to school or college someday that you could go with them and coach them? Wouldn't it be great if you could be right there with them as they go through their days, gently watching over them, giving them advice, and guiding them? I know that sounds pretty intrusive, but maybe you could turn invisible and just whisper in their ears now and then. If you could somehow remove the obnoxious part of it, wouldn't you want the instructive part of it?

That is exactly the role that your teachings should take in your children's lives:

Proverbs 6:20-23 My son, keep your father's commands and do not forsake your mother's teaching. Bind them upon your heart forever; fasten them around your neck. When you walk, they will guide