

A MODERN APPROACH TO POSITIVE AND RESPONSIVE PARENTING



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A Modern Approach to Positive and Responsive Parenting

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To all of you, we look forward to your support in promoting this book as a useful reference for all who wish to learn about how to raise Godly children. We hope that you and your networks would find this text as handy and useful as we envisage it could be.

To God be all the glory for His marvelous doing.

Dr. Malinda Harrahs Esther

Mrs. Roseline Olumbe

Foreword

Welcome to the Parenting Resource book - *A Modern Approach to Positive and Responsive Parenting*. We believe that our vision of an Africa where children are empowered to reach their full potential can only be achieved if families take the most important job they will ever do – that of parenting their children effectively. As an academic institution committed to the mission of God towards children, we believe that African society at large, governments, civil society and organizations at the grassroots level all need to acknowledge the benefits of supporting and equipping parents and all who care for children, to perform their roles with love, diligence, skill and compassion.

Compared to other regions of the world, Africa has a large young population. Approximately one in every five Africans is a child aged less than 6 years old. Unfortunately, a significant number of children growing up in Africa face potentially debilitating conditions which place them at risk of not achieving their developmental and cognitive potentials. An estimated 200 million children in developing countries fail to achieve their potentials which places a heavy burden on the most vulnerable regions of the world since it contributes to lack of school readiness, poor academic achievements, lowered long-term economic productivity, and the perpetuation of the intergenerational cycle of poverty. In such environments, parents find that their ‘natural’ parenting ability falls short of meeting the day-to-day challenges. In this book, we encourage parents and others who care for children to be courageous and bold enough to seek help, guidance and support in bringing up their children.

Generally, majority of parents, in the African context make explicit decisions over matters that concern their children. This most often results in children being timid and unable to voice out their opinions on matters that concern them due to fear of punishment. In most cases, this is done with the belief that parents know best about what their children need. It is therefore difficult for the child in the African family to ask or question certain issues that they feel uncomfortable about in the home. In this book, we discuss the importance of listening to children and considering seriously what they have to say as an important step in shaping their future. The family is the first institution within which children’s world view is shaped, formed and indeed from where they gain the confidence to venture into the external environment. It is crucial then that children become participants in their upbringing so that their sense of responsibility and self-esteem has a place in the socialization process that molds their character.

To this end, this publication provides a platform to caregivers across Africa to understand the challenges of parenting and strategies on enhancing their growth and development. Undoubtedly, this book reflects a wide range of concerns, opinions and in most cases recognizes the struggles that parents and caregivers go through in order to provide for children’s holistic needs. This underscores even further the need to talk to children, to let them know what is going on in the families, in their communities and to have them contribute their opinions to critical decisions that affect their lives.

It is therefore our hope that these experiences will re-awaken the urgent need to involve children meaningfully in our families, for it is the intent of God that children grow to be responsible adults, reach their full potential and eventually enter the kingdom of God after their worth lived lives have ended. This book would be of interest not only to academics in the fields of child development, family studies, child therapy, psychology, education, communication and language, but it also speaks to government agencies and policy makers, faith-based organizations and the Church, and it would also excite the interest of the general public where issues related to the child and the family are largely unresolved.

Rev. Prof. James Kombo

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Kombo', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor,

Academic Affairs, Daystar University

Overview of Chapters

Chapter One

1. Holistic Child Development - *Dr. Daniel Muvengi*
2. Collective Responsibility in the Upbringing of the African Child - *Dr. Barbara Garner Koech & Dr. Malinda Harrahs Esther*
3. An African Child in the Midst - *Dr. Jan Grobbelar*

Chapter Two

1. Challenges Facing Parenting Today - *Prof. James Muola & Dr. Maithya Redempta*

Chapter Three

1. Parenting Approach to Raising Children - *Dr. Scholastica Githinji*
2. Parent-Child Relationship and Transmission of Values - *Dr. Natz A. Petallar*
3. Enhancing Value-Based Lives in Children - *Dr. Florah Karimi*
4. Fostering Stronger Bonds between Children and Parents - *Paul Ruto, Mary Munyao, Catherine Njoki, Irene Kirigo, and Eunice Koros*

Chapter Four

1. Accepting Love and Transforming Love: A Framework for Promoting Appropriate Self-Esteem - *Dr. Dan Brewster*
2. Christ's Missional Challenge on Children and its application for child workforce today - *Dr. Malinda and Judith Ogweno*
3. Strategies for Equipping Parents and Institutions to Protect and Nurture Children Holistically - *Dr. Malinda Harrahs Esther*

Chapter Five

1. Equitable Access and Nurturant Environments for Safe Caregiving and Child Survival- *Dr. Malinda Harrahs and Dr. John Byrant*
2. Strategies for Equipping Parents and Institutions to Protect and Nurture Children Holistically - *Dr. Malinda Harrahs Esther*
3. Strategies for Incorporating Biblical Principles in Measuring and Assessing Child Well-Being - *Terry Mwavi and Dr. Redempta Maithya*

Summary of Chapters

This book attempts to articulate major issues in parenting in modern age. The volume also seeks to heighten critical awareness of the cultural, ethical and theological issues associated with rearing children. Since parenting is a God-given responsibility to humanity, there is much to be learned from different strategies for nurturing children that have been provided in this volume, hence, the intention of this book is to stimulate dialogue and the sharing of best practices in parenting across families, children homes, organizations, theoretical perspectives, and institutions. Through this dialogue, we hope to help parents and child care givers to build concepts and methods for nurturing, disciplining, and how to disciple children using appropriate strategies.

Chapter One is an orientation for the reader on the concept of Holistic Child Development. This chapter focuses on the relationship between the domains of holistic child development including physical, cognitive, social-emotional, and spiritual. It discusses the importance of nurturing children in a holistic manner and in working effectively with children, families, churches and communities. The chapter also discusses the collective approach to parenting children and shows the importance of social-cultural and theological factors towards the growth and development of children. It outlines the benefits of involving community members, especially children themselves, in decision making on issues that affect their lives.

Chapter Two focuses more specifically on the challenges facing parenting in the modern age.

Chapter Three focuses on the essential components to the growth and development of a solid foundation for children including inculcating and transmission of values to children, parental approaches and fostering closer parent child relationships.

Chapter Four encourages the integration of psychosocial approaches to the growth and development of children. It seeks to address fulfillment of children's needs within the context of the family, community and cultural resources and introduces major concepts and rationale underlying psychosocial nurture and spiritual well-being of children.

Chapter five provides the reader with essential strategies for enhancing child well-being, nurture and protection. The strategies presented include: developing comprehensive child development indicators for well-being, parental emotional and physical involvement in child rearing which is an addition to parental provision.