

IT'S ALL IN OUR RAISIN

by Brian Burgess, Forefront Families LLC

I have lived in the mid–south since 1994. One day I heard the expression, ‘It’s all in ya raisin’. Equally puzzling was a song lyric that my wife heard about the same time, ‘The roots of my raisin run deep’. Thoughts of sunny California came to mind. I had visions of vineyards nestled on the sun-drenched foothills of the mountains that form the backdrop to the State, and on the luscious plains that extend towards the sea. I saw the huge bunches of grapes ready to be harvested into wine, their roots reaching deep into the rich fertile soil. Other grapes were going through the drying process to be made into luscious raisins. I love raisins. Was the person making this remark tolling the virtues of the raisin? Was I missing out on some knowledge that could have made my body fitter, or my brain function better? Seriously, I was ready to drive to the nearest health store and make a large purchase.

Quickly I snapped out of my Californian daydream and asked for some clarification. In a full southern accent I heard, “It all depends on how ya parents brung y’up!” My brain did a big flip as I realized what the term meant. It is so true! How we are raised is everything to do with how we function in society. Unfortunately, time can never be regained. I grew up in an era when our parents’ lives were not cluttered with all the stuff we do today. We did not have all the modern conveniences. We did not have the finances to be indulged with things. We invented our own fun and created our own fantasies. We played outside unless it was raining. We worked hard around the property and the family was closely knit. Family meant everything, and every effort was made by parents to ensure their children received a good education and turned out to be honest, hard-working, caring citizens.

Am I advocating a return to those days? Certainly not! What I am advocating is the maintenance of those same values, and parents spending more time actively involved with their children, building lasting relationships that will ensure the maintenance of a healthy, positive home environment. How we raise our children affects society. It affects our children and their children’s lives. Just being at home when our children are home is not spending time with our children. We need to plan activities that are fun, activities that will deposit memories in our children’s minds. It’s all about positive relationships. It’s also about being a good model. A model that causes a youth to say, “I want to be just like my mom or dad.” A model that will cause them to follow the way you raised them, and to follow the faith that motivates your total action as a parent. Kids are never more turned off following your spiritual journey than experiencing hypocrisy, or being raised in a negative home environment.

It’s really hard raising kids today. There are so many distractions. Technology is good, but be aware that it can work against you in raising your

children unless you have a real handle on it. Everybody is 'busy'. It's a good idea not to get caught up in the 'too busy trap'. Raising extraordinary kids should never seem like a dream. If you develop a set of strong core values, and live out those values, your children will inherit a powerful legacy and give you a family to be proud of. Your children will be less likely to accumulate all the negative 'stuff' that grips and motivates so many kids today.

If you have any comments or questions on this subject, please do not hesitate to contact us at sally@forefrontfamilies.org. We invite you to also check out our website at www.forefrontfamilies.org and our blog site at www.forefrontfamilies.blogspot.com for further assistance.