

## Creating Memories

As parents, we love our children and will do everything in our power to make them happy and provide for their future success. We try to give our children the best clothes, the best food, the best doctors and the best schools. Giving is an expression of love. We all agree that giving is good but it needs to be done in moderation. A few generations ago, moderation was not hard to achieve, parents provide the best they could within their financial constraints. It's easier to say "No" when you don't have the money to say "yes."

Many of today's parents can't give their children much more-more of everything-designer clothes, high tech toys, cell phones, the latest computers, countless trips, tutors, professionally orchestrated birthday parties, Bar and Bat Mitzvah spectaculars, and much much more.

The problem is that if we give too much, we give children the wrong message. If we teach children that material things are very important, then there is a danger of material things becoming the measure of who a child is and how successfully the child will judge himself.

Children need to make choices. If they want a number of things and their parents buy it all, then their ability to make preferences is stymied.

Children who get everything do not learn to delay gratification, to save and plan for the future.

Children who get too much can grow up with the unrealistic expectation that life will always give them everything they want.

Finally, we want to teach our children to be "givers" and not always "takers." We want to teach our children to be independent and not always rely on parents for everything materialistic, especially as they grow.

The best gifts that we can give our children cannot be purchased. Giving of ourselves takes time and effort. The events we share, the family dinners we have, the talks we have, the experiences that become memories, the support and the comfort we offer, these are lasting gifts. We recall holidays together, trips we have taken, visiting families and friends, playing ball, going to the beach and most of all, just reading and cuddling before bedtime.

Techno toys are discarded, software gets outdated, but our memories, and particularly our earliest memories, are with us forever. These memories set the stage for our children's lives and expectations of themselves as parents.

Take the time, smell the roses, and create some special memories with your families.