

Parents should encourage children to live an independent life since an early age

“Children should have enough freedom to be themselves - once they've learned the rules.” - *Anna Marie Quindlen, American author, journalist, and opinion columnist*

Recently I read in a parenting magazine that children who live away from home since an early age, learn more skills in life and are mentally more resilient in comparison to those who do not live a hostel life during schooling or college studies. Though the veracity of the statement needs intricate details and in-depth study, yet it appears true to me on the basis of pure logic. Let us see how.

The given topic asks for opinion in favour of the motion that parents should encourage children to live independently since an early age. This implies letting children take important decisions and be wiser in dealing practical life situations. Independent life could mean living away from home, for example, living a hostel life. It could also indicate allowing children to take decisions related to studies, extra-curricular activities, travelling and even monetary matters.

In the first place, we must accept that taking good decisions, like many other traits, is a matter of practice. The more decisions one takes from a young age, the more is one likely to get better off with this. There is no gainsaying the fact that when a child lives away from home since the age of 10 or 12, he has to take at least some decisions. When, for example, a child has to decide which of the mandatory extra-curricular activities he should choose, he would at least decide something like, “No, this time I’ll talk to mom, not dad.”

Secondly, living independently indicates a certain amount of freedom and along comes a perception of what is good and what is bad, what is ethical and what is not? Freedom means more people to talk to and hear to and more opinions to weigh. So analytical wisdom moves northward.

Thirdly, competition increases with latitude. At home, you have only brothers and sisters to compete with. However, with increased freedom, a child gets a bigger space for action. With this, she also faces tough arguments and counter arguments which are devoid of homely affection and guidance. Therefore, independent children and adults learn to self-make their identity fast.

Last but not the least important is the fact that such children can adjust themselves in a situation of crisis. They can even look after others in such situations because of their mental resilience and courage. These traits accumulatively contribute towards leadership qualities. In effect, such children grow up to become good leaders.

All these reasons amply verify the fact that encouraging the youth towards independent living since the age of about 10-12 years benefits them in many ways. If success means acquiring the goals of prosperous living, the youth must be taught to start taking their own decisions from an early age. This is possible only through permitting them freedom, though in a limited way.

Definitely, counter arguments build up stating family values and importance of ethics. However, in today’s world, the same does not look impossible to me. In the modern world, family members are connected on social media and even rituals are performed through video calls. That makes it easy for the parents to remain in touch with children and alongside provide the limited controls we talked about. In short, we stand to gain more by allowing freedom to children than what we fear to lose.

To conclude, why put chains around our kids? Delegate them some authority and some space to act as their mind dictates. Mistakes will be committed, mistakes will be corrected and in the process,

children will turn into responsible human beings. The famous American hedge-fund manager, John Altucher says, "***Freedom is a path you choose every day.***"

Will we allow our children do this every day?