

Letter: Lots of Your Parenting Is by Example, Good and Bad, Including the Way You Abuse Substances

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To the editor:

Apple. Tree.

Children by nature watch and mimic their parents' behaviors, beliefs and attitudes. Health conscious parents take pride in modeling good nutrition and exercise for their kids.

In doing so, their kids are more likely to adopt similar beliefs about eating well and being active. Children whose parents regularly volunteer for and support important causes are more likely to become philanthropic themselves.

Oftentimes we see great family traditions carried on for generations. These are examples of positive role modeling, where the apple not falling far from the tree is a good thing.

However, we cannot forget the simple fact that actions speak louder than words, and that our children are paying attention.

Parents, who drink alcohol excessively to socialize, relieve stress, or combat boredom, may not realize the impact they are having on their children's beliefs that binge drinking is not only acceptable, but necessary.



Children whose parents smoke are more likely to smoke. When parents break the law by allowing their underage kids to drink, or by abusing prescription medications, they are sending very clear messages that breaking the law is okay.

Do we have to be perfect as parents? Absolutely not. We do have to be self-aware and remain conscious of what we're modeling for our children. And along the way, when as a result of our imperfections we misstep, we should take time to recognize our mistakes and show our kids that we can accept responsibility and grow. Parent by example. Apple. Tree.

Kids In Crisis is a proud member of the Darien Thriving Youth Task Force. Having served more than 148,000 children and families served since 1978, Kids In Crisis offers a 24-hour free and confidential helpline staffed with trained professionals.

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News for Darien

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Sincerely,

Denise Qualey

Managing director clinical programs and services,

Kids In Crisis