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In a host culture like Australia, children embrace it as a whole whereas adults do it as bits and pieces. The adults are generally 'selective' when it comes to foreign customs, norms, or values. Children do not break it into pieces and take only the good stuff and leave the bad bits! It is very hard for our children to sort out the good and bad bits of the Australian culture based on our own Sri Lankan cultural values. This seems to be a real dilemma from which nobody could escape. I am not critical of any behavioral aspect of our children but rather sympathetic towards their 'adopted' behavioral pattern. We need to be very conscious about the fact that they receive conflicting messages from different sources in this society, mainly from parents, teachers, peers and the media which may confuse their minds. For example, the wider society does not place any specific value on any particular profession like medicine or engineering, but most of our parents want their children to be doctors, surgeons etc which again reflect our own Sri Lankan value system. Not surprisingly, some parents give them some extra tuition or coaching with the hope of achieving their 'own' ambition. But when these children go back to their school classroom, they are ridiculed by others for

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having extra coaching! This is bound to lead to a serious confusion in their minds are presumably it might damage their motivation to learn as well.

As parents, we need to recognize the fact that educating our children must be of significant concern for all of us, but when children are extra coached, they expect to improve their skills rather than be harmed by the same practice. The interesting thing is that back home, children struggle to succeed with both parental and societal pressure, but paradoxically enough, in this society, they go down the same path with only the parental pressure minus societal pressure. However, the conflict between two value systems may generate the heat that can burn both parties. Regrettably, this is a precarious situation for both parents and children which needs careful thoughts.

Let's talk about some myths and realities in adolescence. Adolescence has

been long been a synonym for trouble in our society. Everyone knows that the road from childhood to adulthood is stormy. Some say that extreme moodiness in adolescence is a normal characteristic and rebellion is an inevitable and necessary part of growing up. Those who are grown up in the western world including many Australians seem to adopt the notion that 'if your teenager does not get involved in drugs, crime and risky sex, you are lucky'. Given the complexity of western society and the speed of change in material and moral values in this society, this proposition is not absurd.

Psychologists and sociologists began to study adolescents and their behaviour in the 1970's particularly how they think, what they think about, how they feel about their lives, why they behave the way they behave and how they respond to different types of parents. There are some generalizations which we can make out this research. Adolescence is not necessarily a difficult period. Problem behaviour, psychological problems and any other family conflicts are no more common in adolescence than at any other stage of life. The great majority of adolescents do not get into trouble. The good kids do not suddenly go bad in adolescence.

Adolescents are generally concerned about what their peers think and do

and they want to fit into their way of life. Peer pressure is not something you are inevitably forced into or you need to be subjugated. Some adolescents earn academic, sports, music honors and some do not and they are as varied as adults. Peer pressure can be a force for positive or negative attitudes depending on the source and ends up with good or evil results. Generally, they choose friends whose values, norms, attitudes are much more similar to their own and perhaps similar to their parents.

There is a popular misconception in society that adolescents only listen to their peers. This is really nonsense. Parents remain the monolithic influence on adolescent life in any society, perhaps more influence in Sri Lankan society than in Australia. They care what parents think, and listen to what parents say even if they do not always agree with parents' views.

When parents do not trust them or take the attitude that all teenagers are troubled and expect the worst from them, parents often get it! If you do not trust your children, they never try to prove that they are trustworthy. The parent-adolescent relationship is a partnership which has mutual obligations. The parents have an obligation to understand their children's needs, feelings and show genuine concerns. Responsive and more matured parents do not demand perfect obedience ('just do it because I say so') from their children nor do they give their children free rein ('do whatever you want'). Parents who have always had a good relationship with their son or daughter in childhood have no difficulty whatsoever in establishing a good relationship in adolescence.

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සුනාමියෙන් අවතැන් වූ දරුවන් හිස් දෙනෙකුගේ අධිකපනය සඳහා මූල්‍ය ආධාර සැපයීම සඳහා ලබන ජූලි 01 වන සෙනසුරාදා සවස 6.30 ට ඊසව්වදඩ වීරන මාවතේ උරුම ප්‍රජා ශාලාවේදී සුරක්ෂා විවිධ ප්‍රසංගය පැවැත්වෙයි. මා පියන් අතිමි වූ හෙළ දරුවනට ජීවිතය දිනන්නට අත දීමට රිෂි ස්වභාව සංගීත මුසුරි සමග රාත්‍රී ආහාරයද සපයන සුරක්ෂා නරඹන්නට ඔබට කරන සුභද ආරාධනයයි මේ.


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