

The Phenomenon of Older Parents

In the past, people married right out of high school and college and had their children while they were still in their twenties. Due to the fact that many people are marrying at a later age and having children while they are in their thirties and forties.

Many of these parents are quick to point out the advantages of having children when you are older. When compared with people in their twenties, these older parents are more financially stable. They have successful careers and can provide their children with more expensive material items. They also can give their kids educational advantages that younger parents could not afford.

Older parents may also be less self absorbed than their younger counterparts. Younger couples may resent the fact that they cannot go out on the weekends while older parents have outgrown this phase in their lives.

These more mature parents also have additional life experiences to draw from when dealing with their children, making them more prepared to become parents. Older parents also tend to have more patience in dealing with younger children.

Older parents also tend to put more stock in the quality time with their youngsters. Due to their maturity, older people tend not to take the small things for granted.

There are several disadvantages to starting a family at a more advanced age. Many older parents do not possess the physical stamina that their younger counterparts have. For these parents, simple activities such as running and climbing may be impossible for them to do.

These older parents also have to worry about their encroaching old age and death. Many of these individuals worry that they will become a burden on their child just as this youngster is becoming an adult. They also have the worry that death will take them before their child reaches adulthood.

An older parent's set of values may not be in sync with the modern problems and issues that their child is dealing with. An older parent may need to educate themselves about these issues so they can better advise their child about how to act in a specific situation.

When speaking to children who have older parents, the negative and positive views vary. While some children feel that they are closer to their older parents when compared to their friends whose parents are younger, others feel that the age gap causes more problems for them. Many children feel embarrassed when their parent sits on a bench at the park while younger parents are playing with their children. It may also embarrass them when strangers assume that their parents are their grandparents. Having the oldest parents present at school functions may also make the child feel uncomfortable.

These children may also feel that their parents are too old fashioned to offer any viable advice and may avoid discussing their problems with their parents. Other children feel that they can speak more openly with their older parents as these adults are less quick to judge than younger parents might be.

There are advantages and disadvantages to being an older parent. As with any parenting, your relationship with your child is what you make of it.

About the Author

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