

# Our Children

By Clyde Surret

America our children are in trouble!

I work in the public school system and I see children being faced with major issues everyday. Whether it is drugs, gangs, sex, pregnancies, rape, prostitution, runaways, or just bad grades, many of our children are making life-and-death decisions when they do not possess the tools or the disposition to do so.



I have three kids of my own and I pray that they will never get caught up in all of this. My wife and I have tried our best to give them a stable and loving home. We are not rich and we do not have a lot of material possessions to give them, but with love, attention, support, and most importantly Jesus will all help lead them in the right path.

I have noticed that many of our children today have no one at home to help guide them. This leaves the children at their own devices. They will look for guidance in other places like the Internet, television, music, gangs, any adult figure in their life, even drug dealers. I have had the opportunity to speak with many of the students that attend the school I work at and some share their stories with me. I can tell you this; some of their stories are not fit to put on paper. Now this is just my opinion, but I think children should have a structured time for just about everything. I guess what I mean is our children need a loving eye on them all the time. They need structure and stability. When I was a child I worked in the fields or on the farm to help my family. Many children today have no idea what it means to have to work at a young age for the things they need, or to just work hard for something they want. I know you have heard the saying, "I want you to have all the things I couldn't have growing up." Sometimes when parents try to provide everything the world offers for their children they forget that what children really need is a parent's time. My mom was always with us at home so my brother and sister were never alone. She was there to help us with what ever came up, while my dad worked to provide for us. I remember the hard work that both of my parents put into our lives and that still affects me to this day. I know that there are a lot of good parents out there. Parenting has always been and will always be a hard job.

So the question is how do we as a society help them?

We must stop offering hand-outs and start providing hand-ups. We need to equip our children with the tools they need to survive and establish self-respect, and self-accountability. I have started a Martial Arts Program at my school to help enable some of the students begin to think positively and learn to function in a structured environment. I

offer them lessons in self-respect, respect for others, self-accountability, and self-discipline. Oh! There is a word no one wants to hear.

The students that I come in contact with have confided in me many things and one thing I have learned from them is that they are looking to please someone. If it isn't a mature responsible adult then it will be a gang member or themselves. A society can never prosper and thrive if every member is out for themselves. I believe that children need someone willing to listen and be there to see them shine; someone who cares about them and how they feel. Someone who will not judge them but help guide them. I hope I have been that person to the children I am blessed enough to work with. I hope you will be that person too.