

Helping parents to teach kids well

THE ARTICLE "Most SA teens are coping with life" (The Star, July 8) refers.

It is interesting to learn that just more than one in 10 South African teenagers say they come from an unhappy home. It should serve as an eye-opener to parents that their child could be one of the 100 unhappy ones among the 1 000 teens surveyed.

Let the cries of those children serve as a voice to others who have not revealed their feelings. As parents we strive to provide a supportive home for our children, friendly enough to allow them to step forward and communicate with us.

Parents, and adults in general, serve as a reference to children on the phases, stresses and obstacles of life. Children use adults as their role models in learning how to respond to and cope with life's challenges. Thus, an adult even unintentionally setting a bad example can lead to a child adopting that negative behaviour.

Parenting is a job that comes with enormous responsibility - but there's no instruction manual.

Girls and Boys Town has 51 years of experience in helping youngsters, families, teachers and other professionals to respond effectively to life's challenges.

For the parents who wish to strengthen and build on their child-rearing skills, the Girls and Boys Town "Common Sense Parenting" workshop is ideal. It provides parental support and teaches skills that increase communication within the home. Parents can manage their children's behaviour in respectful and powerful ways, building on relationships in the family while avoiding the stresses of conflict and power struggles. For more information, call the Girls and Boys Town national hotline at 0861 58 58 58.

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