



# HOW TO RAISE A TOUGH TEEN

By Glen Gerreyn

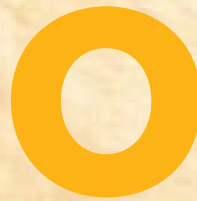






# HOW TO

## Raise a Tough Teen



ur world is becoming ever more complex socially, environmentally and politically. It is a world where many flounder, making it increasingly difficult for them

to develop meaning or mastery. Blinded by societal pressure and fears, many young people find themselves future-blind and disengaged. Rapid changes in technology, and increased addiction to social media have seen people becoming stuck in a permanent and ceaseless present.

For these reasons it is vital our children develop specific skills to enable them to be successful in this new epoch — skills such as adaptability, social and cultural interaction, productivity, self-management and problem-solving.

Three additional character traits your child will need to acquire in order to lead and to create positive impact in the world around them are examined below.







be  
proactive  
not  
reactive



Being proactive is about taking responsibility for yourself. We cannot keep blaming everything that goes wrong on our parents, our grandparents, our

teachers, our genetics or our circumstances. Real change occurs when we resolve to make the necessary changes to bring about a transformation in our life. Our motto needs to be — If it's going to be, it's up to me! If our children are struggling in a particular subject, finding it hard to make friends or complaining that their teacher doesn't like them, don't let them throw their arms up in the air and say, "I quit!". Who told them that they had to accept failure?

If life isn't going to plan, help them devise a strategy. Take them through the steps on how to organise a tutor or ask the teacher for more help. In order to have friends, one must be a friend. Brainstorm how they can show hospitality to those around them or how a small act of kindness towards a teacher may help them realise they really want to learn and hence build a more positive connection.

Most problems have a creative solution and, if they don't, work together to determine how to enable them to alleviate the discomfort and carry on.

A proactive person uses language like — I can. I will. I must. A reactive person use language like — I can't. Do I have to? or, If only. Teaching our children how to respond wisely to life's challenges rather than reacting blindly is a formidable trait. In our family, our first response in any situation is — we don't fuss, we don't react, we don't worry. We put together a plan and we execute it.







want my four kids to be tough! Yes, they also need to be vulnerable and open, but that is also about toughness, as it takes courage to be vulnerable.

I don't want them to fall apart at the smallest things. I once caught my four-year-old daughter telling my seven-year-old daughter to "Toughen up, princess!" That was a proud parenting moment.



# 2.

## develop hardiness

Our family motto, (thank you, Brene Brown) is "WE DO HARD THINGS". It's plastered in large black letters across the top of our kitchen window. It's there to remind our children (and their parents) that, on occasion, they will be called upon to do hard things. They will be called upon to step up and be brave. Giving them the knowledge that they can do hard things — and I truly believe they want to do them — gives them the permission they seek to go for it ... and fail ... and go for it ... and fail ... until they get there.

A study found that entrepreneurs are three times more likely than the general public to have dyslexia and people with ADHD are also three times more likely to start their own company. Disadvantaged people, with a mindset and a heart set towards hardiness, can make setbacks work in their favour. We don't have to allow a closed door to remain closed. If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door or pick the lock. Learn how to survive and, if necessary, teach young people how to live by their wits, find a new angle and be creative.









have a  
bias  
towards  
action



Fortune favours the brave because the brave take action! We must help our children accept that in real life nobody is going to turn around their big red chair and say, I want

you on my team. If they really want to progress, they can't wait to be ordained, approved of or picked out of a crowd of hopefuls and given a crown. Sometimes, uninvited, you need to make the choice yourself and take the action necessary to step closer to your goals. True leadership comes from within — following your heart.

The truth is YouTube wants your child to have their own show, but they are not going to call; iTunes wants your child to write their own song, but they are not going to call either; Amazon wants your child to write their own book, but they are not going to text you. The platforms are available, the opportunity is at our fingertips, the audience is standing by, but the all-important ingredient, action, is elusive.

There are 13-year-old girls making \$8000 a month selling slime on Instagram and the highest earning YouTuber last year was a 7-year-old boy who made \$22,000,000 unboxing toys. Neither of these young people is smarter or more talented or possesses more opportunity than your child. What they both have is a bias towards action. They are willing to give things a go, fail, fail, get their heart broken and then try again.

Soft skills are really not all that soft. They can be harnessed to help lift your child — and yourself — to a level beyond their current capacity.

## MORE RESOURCES BY GLEN GERREYN AVAILABLE ONLINE



"I'm just writing to thank you so very much for writing such a hope filled book! Earlier this year I had a very severe episode of depression in which I was twice admitted to hospital. While staying there, Dad came and gave me your book. At the time I was having a lot of difficulty with concentration and accepted only out of politeness, but when I began to read it I just couldn't put it down. I finished it within a couple of days with a new realization that I had a bright and hopeful future. After reading the book I met a girl in the ward. We started having a chat and she told me her deep desire to end her life. She was convinced she was not going to live past 16. I told her about your book and how much it impacted me. I offered it to her that night and she told me she didn't put it down until morning. The next day when I saw her she put her arms around me and said 'That book saved my life!'. It was so amazing!"



"Thanks to you and your book The HopeFull Life, I have realised just how much I am worth. Your book has personally helped me overcome my anger management issues and helped me through many personal issues in my past. I don't think you could ever fathom or comprehend the effect you have on people and just how amazing an individual you are." Year 12 Student



"I found your book to be a rollercoaster for me. Tears welling in a public library isn't a pretty picture, but I was overwhelmed thinking about the influence my dad has had on me and your book bringing it to the surface. I now plan to write a letter to my dad before I move out next year, expressing my admiration and the desire to strengthen the father-son bond you mention in your book. I learned being vulnerable, emotionally, is not a bad thing, and not shameful. I feel more complete having read your work and thank you for it." Year 12 Student



Gifted for Greatness is a meaningful rhyming book beautifully illustrated and lovingly created to release your child's inner strengths. Every child needs to know they have a gift, the younger they understand this universal truth the greater the potential impact. But it's not enough to know they possess an innate skill set, but that those talents must be developed through a positive work ethic. This book communicates those principles in a way every child can grasp.



Making a statement about whom you are carries influence. Not just for the person making the statement but for listeners as well. Our courage emboldens others. As Marianne Williamson so eloquently disclosed, 'playing small does not serve the world'. Hence I have filled this book with confident and enriching statements such as: I am tough. I am daring. I am smart. I am able. Why? Because language matters, your language is a large part of who you are. What you repeatedly say about yourself paints a portrait. Helping our young people attest to and ratify, what comes after the words 'I am \_\_\_\_\_', strengthens their sense of self. This will also help them to not become victims of other people opinions but designers of their future.

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