



Couples Corner February 2007

Freedom of choice

How do you know how much freedom to give your children? It's very hard for parents these days when children are generally given a great deal of freedom of choice. Where do you draw the line? It's hard to balance between being too controlling or too lax. If you make all the decisions for your children you can create an adult who doesn't know his own mind and you will be accused of being a control freak! What do you use as a point of reference – it's no good thinking back to your own childhood for children were seen and not heard then, let alone allowed to choose what to eat, wear and what TV programs to watch. My granddaughter has been brought up by a modern father who has allowed her to virtually choose everything. From an older generation perspective we have felt at times she has been given too much choice for it has been quite challenging for her; learning the hard way by taking the consequences of her mistakes or upsetting friends and family by overstepping acceptable lines of social behaviour. However she is now totally aware of her own mind and she knows what she wants and what suits her. Her closest friend has been brought up under a far more controlling regime and she gives in all the time to whoever dominates her world; friends, class mates and parents. As a result she is unable to make her own choices about virtually anything. I think a parent needs to dig deep within on every issue that comes up. Are you making a ruling based on your own fears; your own desires, a matter of control and power? Or are you making a decision based on the very best for your child. If you encourage freedom for your children they can reach maturity with a good sense of their own free will, however your guidance will give them the background that they need to make wise choices.

Love and blessings

Anne