

## Parental Failure and Effects of Lack of Parental Guidance

\*<sup>1</sup> Bodiud Zaman Ahmed

\*<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Manikpur Anchalik College, Manikpur, Assam, India.

### Article Info.

E-ISSN: 2583-6528

Impact Factor (QJIF): 8.4

Peer Reviewed Journal

Available online:

[www.alladvancejournal.com](http://www.alladvancejournal.com)

Received: 21/Feb/2026

Accepted: 23/March/2026

### Abstract

Parental failure, in the context of parenting and child development, refers to situations where parents are unable or unwilling to fulfil their parental duties, leading to negative consequences for the child. This can encompass a wide range of issues, including neglect, inadequate provision of care, or even the infliction of emotional or physical harm. The consequences can be severe, potentially impacting a child's emotional, psychological, or social well-being. Parental failure is a complex issue with various factors that contribute and significant effects. It's not simply about a parent's occasional mistakes or perceived shortcomings, but rather a pattern of behavior or a lack of essential parenting skills that negatively impacts a child's development.

### \*Corresponding Author

**Bodiud Zaman Ahmed**

Assistant Professor, Department of  
Education, Manikpur Anchalik College,  
Manikpur, Assam, India.

**Keywords:** Failing, Criticism, Conflicting, Vulnerable period, Emotional Support.

### Introduction

The feeling of failing as a parent is common, but it's important to distinguish between feeling like a failure and actual parental failure, which involves significant harm to a child. Many parents experience self-doubt and questioning, but active learning and growth indicate a commitment to positive parenting. Recognizing and addressing feelings, seeking support, and focusing on positive aspects can help overcome this feeling.

### Objectives

Parental failures, in the context of child development, often refer to instances where parents make mistakes or fall short in their parenting practices. These failures can stem from various sources, including a lack of knowledge about child development, personal challenges, or simply making human errors. While "failure" may seem negative, it's important to acknowledge that all parents make mistakes, and learning from these experiences is crucial for both parents and children.

### What is Parental Failure?

Several parents who claim or believe they are failing as parents may not actually be experiencing parental failure, in my opinion. When a parent's parenting approach results in

serious trauma and/or physical or emotional harm to their child, it is considered parental failure.

### What's the Hardest Age to Lose a Parent?

Although it is challenging to identify a "worst" age to lose a parent, as the challenges associated with this loss can be enhanced by specific life stages, individual experiences with grief can differ widely. Adolescence to young adulthood (about 12-25 years old) is frequently identified as a particularly vulnerable period.

### What to do if you feel like you're failing as a Parent

1. Acknowledge your feelings. First, acknowledge your feelings....
2. Seek support. Don't be afraid to ask for help....
3. Reflect on your parenting goals....
4. Practice self-compassion....
5. Set realistic expectations....
6. Focus on the positive....
7. Learn and adapt.

What is the worst thing a parent can feel, in your opinion? I'll give you a few seconds to think about that before I give you my answer.

"Hopeless" is, in my opinion, the worst feeling a parent can experience. This is the moment when you feel as though there is no hope for you, your child, or your family, since everything is going wrong and there isn't any hope.

I've talked with many parents who have been on this road; I've been there myself.

As you stand there and look into the future, all you see is bleak. "Failure" is the only term that accurately describes how you see yourself as a parent. It's a very bad feeling. You awake in the morning, and as soon as your daughter sees you, she makes a negative, snarky comment. Or you enter your son's room and discover that he hasn't cleaned up the mess that has been there for weeks or even months. When you ask him about it, he responds, "F-you, Mom." There is a fear that seeps into everyday life that your children will never develop the skills to be productive members of society. You may feel overwhelmed and defeated by all the duties, and the day hasn't even started yet. It can be sufficient to make any parent question how they could have ever considered having children to be a good decision.

### What Can a Parent do to Change this Seeming Downward Spiral?

Most of us try to teach our kids the same things that our parents taught us. And while such methods may have worked for our generation, they do not work very well for this generation of kids. Kids today are growing up in a different culture than I did. In my day, it was not okay to say back to my mom (at least not when she was in the same room as me). Today, disrespecting and defiance of adults is far more common and even celebrated in the media. The barrier between kids and adults has become blurred, and a lot of kids don't even see it.

When we work with parents on the Empowering Parents parent coaching service, we talk about how everything starts with consuming and confirming the calm confidence of a parent who is in charge. Does this mean you will actually feel like you are always in control? No, probably not. While I feel like I don't have control over a situation, I remember a slogan we used a lot while I worked at a residential facility: "Fake it till you make it." In other words, even if you don't feel like it, behave as if you have control. You'll get to a point where taking control comes naturally, and you'll no longer be acting. Let's say you are asking your son to clean his room for the umpteenth time. Set clear expectations and inform him that he is not allowed to use the car until he cleans his room. Link the task with one of his privileges. Begin by having him earn the things he considers to be his rights by assigning them to what you want him to do. He might say "Whatever" or something equally irritating in response to your request. How would you respond? If you're like most parents, you might rush into the conflict, saying something like, "How dare you talk to me that way? Whom do you believe you are?" "Let me tell you something." He answers with even more disrespectful, and a fight ensues. The problem is no longer whether or not his room will be clean. Instead, it's about the power struggle you're now completely involved in.

So, try something different. Instead of getting into that argument, ignore the remark and walk away. Go into another room, go for a walk, do anything other than get into an argument. Even though it may feel like he's winning, the truth is, you're still the one with the power. He's not going to get the privilege until his room is clean, so what is he actually winning?

There are many additional tools in *The Total Transformation Program* that will help you respond to your child's behavior more successfully, transforming what appears to be a hopeless situation into one with a far a better future. Believe me, there is hope; I assist parents in finding it every day. All it takes is a little courage on your part to begin doing things a little differently, so you can take control of your parenting and family.

### Key Aspects of Parental Failure Include

- **Inability to Provide Basic Needs:** This includes insufficient food, shelter, clothing, and medical care.
- **Neglect:** This involves a consistent failure to meet a child's emotional or physical needs, leading to a lack of supervision, safety, and nurturing.
- **Abuse:** This encompasses physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, causing significant trauma and developmental harm.
- **Unwillingness to Engage:** Some parents might be physically present but emotionally unavailable, failing to provide necessary support, guidance, or positive interactions.
- **Impact on Child's Development:** Parental failure can lead to various negative outcomes for children, including:
- **Emotional and Psychological Problems:** Anxiety, low self-esteem, and attachment issues. depression,
- **Behavioral Problems:** Aggression, delinquency, and substance abuse.
- **Academic Difficulties:** Difficulty concentrating, learning disabilities, and school failure.
- **Social Challenges:** Difficulty forming healthy relationships and social isolation.

### Factors Contributing to Parental Failure

- **Parental Mental Health Issues:** Depression, anxiety, or other mental health conditions can impair a parent's ability to provide adequate care.
- **Substance Abuse:** Alcohol or drug addiction can severely compromise a parent's ability to parent effectively.
- **Lack of Knowledge or Skills:** Some parents may lack the necessary knowledge or skills to parent effectively, especially if they did not have positive parenting role models themselves.
- **Poverty and Social Isolation:** Poverty can create significant stress and challenges for parents, making it difficult to provide for their children's needs.
- **History of Abuse or Neglect:** Individuals who experienced abuse or neglect as children may be more likely to repeat these patterns with their own children.

### Addressing Parental Failure

- **Early Intervention and Support:** Providing resources and support to parents before problems escalate is crucial.
- **Parenting Education and Training:** Equipping parents with the knowledge and skills to parent effectively can make a significant difference.
- **Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment:** Addressing underlying mental health or substance abuse issues is essential for improving parenting.
- **Child Protective Services:** In cases of severe neglect or abuse, child protective services may need to intervene to ensure a child's safety and well-being.

In essence, parental failure is a significant issue with long-term effects. A multifaceted approach that includes prevention, intervention, and support is essential to protect children and promote healthy family functioning.

### Understanding Parental Failure

- **Common Feelings:** Many parents experience feelings of inadequacy or like they are failing, especially when children misbehave or when advice is conflicting.
- **Parental Failure vs. Feeling like a Failure:** While feeling like a failure is often a temporary state, parental failure involves actions that cause lasting harm.
- **Signs of Parental Failure:** These include sabotaging a child's success, being needy or controlling, constant criticism, and lack of emotional support.
- **Impact on Children:** Failed parenting can lead to children experiencing emotional distress, trauma, and difficulty forming healthy relationships.

### Coping with Feelings of Failure

- **Acknowledge and Validate:** Recognize that it's okay to feel this way and that many parents experience similar challenges.
- **Seek Support:** Don't hesitate to reach out to friends, family, or a therapist for guidance and emotional support.
- **Reflect on Your Goals:** Consider what kind of parent you want to be and what values you want to instill in your children.
- **Practice Self-compassion:** Be kind to yourself and recognize that you are doing your best.
- **Focus on the Positive:** Celebrate your strengths as a parent and the positive moments you share with your children.
- **Learn and Adapt:** Seek out information and resources to improve your parenting skills and adapt your approach as needed.
- **Set Boundaries:** Establish clear boundaries with your children and stick to them.
- **Seek Professional Help:** If you are battling with emotions of failure and are concerned about your parenting, look for professional help from a therapist or counsellor.

### Conclusion

Parental failure, which can be expressed in many forms of neglect or abuse, can have major and lasting negative effects on a child's development and well-being. These consequences can range from impaired social skills and emotional development to mental health problems and challenges in developing healthy relationships later in life.

It is important to remember that while parental failure can have profound and lasting effects, it is not an insurmountable obstacle. With appropriate support and intervention, children who have experienced parental failure can heal, develop resilience, and build positive lives.

### References

1. Ames C, Khoju M, Watkins T. The effects of school-to-home-to-school communication on children's motivation and learning, Parent involvement: The relationship between school-to-home communication and parents' perceptions and beliefs, 1993.
2. Baltimore MD. Center on Families, Communities, Schools, & Children's learning.

3. Baker AJL, Piotrkowski CS, Brooks-Gunn J. The effects of the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPO) on children's school performance at the end of the program and one year later. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*. 1998; 13(4):571-588. EJ580313.
4. Baker AJL, Soden LM. Parent involvement in children's education: A critical assessment of the knowledge base. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL. ED407127, 1997.
5. Baker DP, Stevenson DL. Mothers' strategies for children's school achievement: Managing the transition to high school. *Sociology of Education*. 1986; 59(1986):156-166. EJ340568.
6. Balli SJ, Demo DH, Wedman JF. Family involvement with children's homework: An intervention in the middle grades. *Family Relations*. 1998; 47(2):149-157. EJ573101.
7. Bronfenbrenner U. A report on longitudinal evaluations of preschool programs, Vol. II: Is early intervention effective? Office of Child Development, Department of Health, Education and Welfare. ED093501, 1974.
8. Catsambis S. Expanding knowledge of parental involvement in secondary education-Effects on high school academic success (CRESPAR Report 27), 1998.
9. Baltimore MD. Johns Hopkins University. ED426174. <http://www.csos.jhu.edu/crespar/Reports/report27entire.htm>
10. Epstein JL. "Effects on Student Achievement of Teacher Practices and Parent Involvement." In S. Silvern (Ed.), *Advances in Reading/Language Research*, Vol. 5. Literacy through Family, Community and School Interaction. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1991.
11. Johnson V. "Parent Centers Send Clear Message: Come be a Partner in Educating Your Children." *Research and Development Report, September*, No. 4. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University, Center on Families, Communities, Schools and Children's Learning, 1993.