

Available and Lost Opportunities for Effective Parenting in South Africa

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ABSTRACT Many children in South Africa are affected by widespread social problems, a situation, which has resulted, to a very large extent, from significant discrepancies in the degree to which effective parenting is being practiced. This state of affairs is indicative of available opportunities, which are provided in the form of counseling services, child protection services, parenting skills programs and legislation such as the Children's Act, to some extent failing to keep pace with the levels of child abuse, crime and violence committed by children, prostitution, early pregnancies and other social ills. On the other hand, the legacy of apartheid has reinforced lost opportunities, which is particularly evident in troubled housing and educational programs. Although the economy is developing swiftly in certain sectors, discrepancies underline the lack of an effective redistributive capacity to advance social programs, particularly those, which affect the wellbeing of parents and children. The researchers, who respectfully submit this paper, on the basis of the gaps, which have been identified, recommend either an altogether new paradigm, or else a dramatic paradigm shift in order to provide opportunities for communities to educate their members adequately.