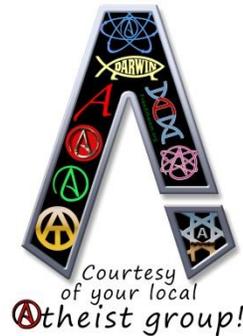


## Do You Teach Your Children to Seek the Truth and Question Your Assertions?



It is perfectly acceptable and even virtuous to think critically about any faith based ideas which are silly, harmful and oppressive.

It is wise (and not disobedient) to refuse to be told what to think. Be your own person and care about what is actually true. Test it. Scrutinize it. Believe what turns out to be reality.

Consistently rational people take pride in assuring that their beliefs are reasonable, demonstrable and if possible, true. Atheism doesn't depend upon this dedication, but lacking dogmatic influences often leads to a high degree of intellectual integrity. Passing these qualities down to our children requires that parents not only be teachers, but seekers of truth and consistent examples of logical reasoning. Despite what believers might claim, teaching children how to discern truth is never indoctrination and is worlds apart from their own religious conditioning.

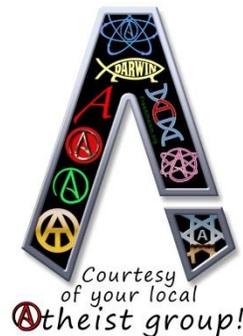
Obviously, it would be easy to exaggerate to our kids with 'truths' like "Theists enjoy having excuses to hate and hurt people." or "All believers are just brainwashed by reading holy books". Atheists, however, have no reason to lie and typically have the morality and honesty to say to their children **"I don't know that gods don't exist, but I've found no reason to believe that they do."** This type of admission lays out a beautiful foundation for expecting, seeking and representing truth.

Subsequently, promoting critical thinking and skepticism to one's children, simply becomes a matter of practicing it and praising its use. A pivotal level of achievement with this is when children realize that parents and teachers are not immune to being challenged. It may shock you when your child suddenly doesn't believe some random assertion of yours, but you'll certainly be one proud parent when a child expects verification!

My proudest experience is when my 5 year old tells me to "prove it", but tentatively agrees to take me at my word, until I can show him the evidence. This tells me that he wants to be sure of the truth, but he trusts that I have upheld the same standard all along and will be able to back up my claim. So the next time your child questions your latest conclusion, don't simply demand that he believes you, but find the truth together and enthusiastically praise his or her intellectual integrity! **Have you given your child reason to believe that you honestly seek the truth?**



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