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Should Parents Be Held Accountable for the Criminal Acts of Their Children?

Recently, youth gang connected attacks have been occurring in an increasing prevalence, with some even causing deaths, such as the killing of a college student at Suburbs East. Such occurrences have made a lot of people to wonder about the origin of those violent actions, with much of the extent of guilt being put on the parents of such adolescents. In any event, one has to question whether the parents should be penalized for the offenses of their kids.

Some people believe that parents should be held responsible for the criminal acts of their offspring because parents are mostly accountable for the education and upbringing of their kids, and frequently impact the actions and behavior of their children until they become mature and independent. This is because they are almost always the ones that raise their kids after birth. As such, it is believed that parents start to influence the ethical range of their children from a young age, and one's ethics are critically impacted by the way parents act and their personalities (Gratz, 169).

This logic can make parents responsible for their children if they do wrong later on — because they are understood to not have raised their child in the right way. Furthermore, there is an argument that children are virtually completely controlled by their parents, as they are apt to want to make their parents happy, and they would, therefore, listen to whatever they are told to do or how they are told to behave (Michael, Andrew and Michael, 4). This, in turn, makes many people think that parents should always be the ones to be blamed for the criminal acts of their children, as they believe that they have the power to warn and control them.

Parents should be held accountable since people trust that parents should be blamed after their offspring commit crimes, as the guilt can simply be placed on the



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parents. This is primarily because of the belief that a teenager is the outcome of his or her childhood and that someone other than the teenager should take accountability for the destruction and trouble caused by them. Because of all this, many think that parents should be accountable for their children's offenses (Valentine, 80).

However, this should not be so, as not all parents are entirely responsible for their kids criminal acts or actions. Although there are some parents who have not remained good encouragement for their teenagers, it does not mean that all parents are bad influences. Certainly, several children do wrong and show violence, because their parents have aggressively ill-treated them at their young age. Maybe their parents taught them that it is okay to commit crimes, or they saw their parents committing criminal activity themselves.

In spite of that, there are still plenty of parents who have raised their kids properly, and even tried to prevent their children from committing crimes, yet their children still voluntarily commit such acts. In such circumstances, parents should not be held responsible. As conflicting to what lots of people might believe, parents do not have thorough control over their kids, and many are not even aware of what their children are capable of doing—regardless of the amount of time spent with them (Valentine, 67).

An example of this situation would be of a young girl from Japan who murdered her friend in 2004. This happened because the young girl was not happy with her friend. The young girl was an average girl from an average family, with a decent educational record. This example shows that parents are not inevitably responsible for their kid's actions. There are some circumstances where parents are not completely to blame for



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their kid's misconducts, as they have already done their part to teach their child correctly and offer them the right ethical guidance. It would, therefore, be wrong to blame all parents for causing their children to commit offenses, and as such, not all parents ought to be accountable and, as a result, punished, for their childrens' crimes (Gratz, 169).

Also, the influence of parents is simply just one factor that forms the right Ethical compass of a child. There are other things that impact children's' ethics, including, but not limited to, school, belief, and law. Other factors may make children commit crimes; it is not only because of parental influence. For instance, of late, there are a lot of violent games and cinemas on the market, rarely with any limitations to stop young people from being exposed to such poor behavior. If children play games that are violent from their childhood, it is likely that they can ultimately learn ways of behaving from these games. Children could, therefore, show demonstrations of viciousness in their lives, possibly even to the degree of committing offenses.

In such a state, the major issue that has eroded the morals of children, and forced them to do wrong, would be their means, and consequently, the parents should not be held responsible for the crimes committed by their kids. For example, in America, the sale of weapons are permitted. If parents do not carefully stow their weapons away, these hazardous arms could, perhaps, end up in the hands of teenagers who are young and might not understand the repercussions these firearms could bring (Arthur, 247).

If kids end up using weapons to hurt anyone, the government should also be held accountable, as it was regulations that first granted weapons to the youngster – though not directly – with relative ease to obtain such hazardous firearms. Since there are a set



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of diverse factors involved in prompting children to do wrong, parents should not be solely reprimanded for their children's offenses; instead, the punishment should be distributed among everyone who took part.

Moreover, parental obligation laws in some countries state that it is impossible to define the precise age of criminal accountability. There are inconsistencies with evaluating the age a child should adhere to criminal charges among many countries globally. For instance, in India and Thailand, the illegitimate age of obligation is seven years old. Whereas, in China and Japan, it is fourteen years old. This discrepancy between ages of criminal responsibility demonstrates that most governments are not able to precisely define at what age a child should be held lawfully responsible.

With this in consideration, I think that parents should never be punished under such laws that are made that have such ages so broadly distributed, as they cause more conflict than good. Furthermore, there are discrepancies among countries with how to enforce such laws. For example, let's look again at the case of the Japanese girl who murdered her friend, her parents could be held accountable, because they were in Japan, but would not be held responsible if they were from India (Gratz, 169).

This demonstrates the conflict that a penalty for parents could be susceptible to the diverse ages of criminal liability in different states. Such laws blame parents, where they are displayed. As being wholly accountable for children below the age of criminal charging. Parents are chastised on behalf of their kids, even if they had nothing to do with the crime. Such a law is also endorsed under the statement that there are no other subsidiary reasons for the acts of the child, which is not consistently the situation (Arthur, 236).



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In my judgment, instead of holding parents accountable for the wrongdoings of their kids that are below the criminal liability age, they should be acquitted until they are deemed guilty, instead of being automatically held responsible before even appearing in court. Without standing trial, this puts parents in an underprivileged and prejudicial place. As such, parents should not be held responsible for the crimes committed by their offspring unless proven guilty (Valentine, 69).

Additionally, parents should not be accountable or penalized for the wrongdoings of their children because the choice to commit the offenses are virtually always made by the children, without involving parents. Children make the decision whether to commit crimes before doing them, and if they commit the wrongdoing, it shows that he or she chose to do it. Even though there might have been external motivation, the final decision lies with the person who chose to commit the act. If children should be held solely responsible for their actions, some may then say that such an opinion will work only if the child is mature enough to make complete and healthy choices (Gratz, 169).

To conclude, the projected fault of parents for their children (who are below the age of criminal accountability and have committed a crime) is a means of directing all the responsibility to the parents. In humane judgement, once such offenses are committed, a person, of any age, should be required and prepared for the costs and Guilt. In cases where children are thought not to be capable of real criminal acts, and therefore not able to make a decision to commit the wrongdoing, parents should be accused and chastised for the actions of their kids (Arthur, 253).

In my opinion, such judgment should be altered, as children's command of committing such offenses are a result of the decision of said children, and potentially the



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impact of other aspects—not allowing parents to be the only ones held accountable for the deeds of their children. As such, I disagree with the statement that parents should be accountable and chastised for the actions of their kids. Other reasons should also be considered when determining who should be held accountable.

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