

Alex Berenson has a family of three, oldest 13, spaced over seven years. I have had two families of three, spaced over seven and now nine years, first in the United States, the second in Ukraine. One failed, one apparently bound for success. At 53, Alex is exactly as old as I was when my first three were the ages of his. Now, at 83, my second three span just about that same range.

My [600+ reviews here](#) include many on the sexes, evolution, education. Please peruse them; there is not space here to link to all that are relevant.

His milieu is very urban, liberal upper middle-class New York. Mine used to be liberal, upper middle-class Bethesda. I presently live as a retiree in the very different society of Kyiv, Ukraine.

Alex presents fifty observations on fatherhood, with almost all of which I agree. His points are in italic, my observations indented in the following

Fatherhood is underrated. The American liberal elite enjoys portraying fathers as clueless, or worse. I hope to speak for a practical, no-nonsense style of fathering - not parenting, fathering- that has been under attack for too long.

The models have been broken. They were pretty much intact during my childhood in the 1950s. They came apart with the sexual revolution, the drug revolution, and liberal takeover of academia and government in the 1960s.

Exemplars were scarce in Berenson's Generation X. They are even more scarce among Millennial dads today.

Berenson's project must be to resurrect the practices of a mostly vanished era and repudiate the ethos of the present. The woke, victimhood, Millennial and Gen Z ethos.

Two further warnings: my oldest child is only 13, so I cannot know if what I am saying applies to older teens. But at the least, I hope they help you think about your own fathering style, what works and what doesn't for you and your family.

I moved to Ukraine in 2007 actively looking for a traditional wife and a second family. Our son, 14, and daughters 8 and 5 are healthy, normal and pleasant to be around.

The reasons for my divorce and custodial status don't matter, not for this piece.

Though good taste and good sense require that he not to hash them out here, they are very relevant. Many of us get divorced. The factors are very much the issues of the day. Read [The Great Feminization](#), [Sexual Utopia in Power](#), [The Marriage Problem](#) and related titles among [the reviews](#).

The core problem is our modern denial that men and women evolved to be different. See this [brief video](#) and [Male-Female the Evolution of Human Sexual Differences](#) and related books among the reviews.

I mention my status as a single dad only so you know. And although I wouldn't wish my situation on anyone, it has forced me to become a better parent and surely a more aware one.

Berenson's marriage is relevant. Especially the exceptional revelation that he would up with child custody after 15 years of marriage.

Yet although my situation is somewhat unusual, I hope this advice is relevant to dads in two-parent families as well as those who are divorced and split custody of their children. I believe fatherhood is a fundamentally conservative act.

It is conservative in the true sense of the word. We want to conserve our blood line, our culture and our family. All of which are under attack by those who call themselves liberals.

Fathers aren't just second moms who aren't as good at baking cookies. They can and should play a fundamentally different role.

They can and should play a fundamentally different role. Yes!!! They [evolved to fill a different role](#). They should be permitted to fill that role.

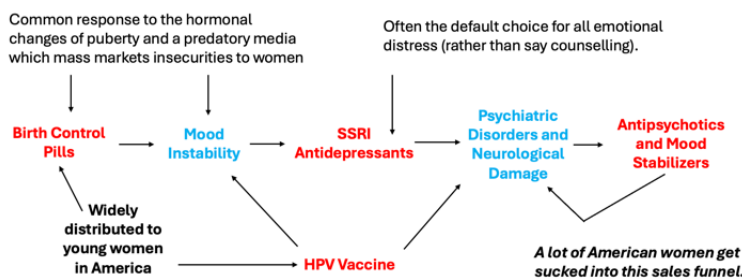
not by sugarcoating life's realities but by acknowledging them while helping his children face them.

There is an evolutionary basis in this. A woman can bear only a few children in her life, but she knows precisely which are hers. A man can father a great many, but in the relaxed sexual ethos of tribal societies, they never knew which were theirs. She favors her kids; his interest is the health of the tribe.

Girls become women on their own.

My strongest disagreement. Throughout evolutionary history both boys and girls have been shaped by the societies to which they belong. As Alex later observes, kids are being shaped to be transexual. Xavier Musk would never have done it on his own. My kids played with Arianna Huffington's. I strongly suspect that her daughter's being lesbian is due to the influence of Bethesda society.

Girls are being indoctrinated with feminism. My daughters were started on the pill at 13 "to control acne." It changes their hormonal balance and leads to antidepressants at a very vulnerable age. They are likewise given HPV vaccines. [A Midwestern Doctor](#) describes it.



Kids are taught the dogma of "toxic masculinity" and "rape culture," "patriarchy" and the like in their woke schools. Appreciation of motherhood has to be rekindled.

the crisis American boys and young men face, how they have fallen behind women in school and increasingly at work

This is a societal-level problem that deeply affects men. Society discourages men by discriminating against us at every level. [This biography](#) provides an amusing account of my own experiences, beginning in the 1970s.

Alex is absolutely right to disparage the hucksters who exploit the incels' very real plight. It affects many of the men who attended supposedly wonderful private schools with the children of my first family.

But our culture has discouraged fathers - real fathers, real men - from teaching their boys (and girls) the virtues of a more serious and stoic masculinity.

It starts by discouraging men from even trying to cope with women. Discouraging marriage is a second step. Discouraging having kids is a third. Discouraging us from teaching our children is four levels down. Few even get there.

The good news is that there is a large and growing divide between young men and women [being reported](#). For the first time in history, more young men than women want to marry and have children. The bad news is that the women are reportedly uninterested, even more woke.

I count myself blessed - and blessed is not too strong a word - every day to get to spend time with these children.

There is no greater blessing. Per the Bible, "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." We are links in the chain of existence, and we have no greater obligation than to pass the gifts we have received down the chain.

[After that introduction] here are 50 lessons about being a dad I have learned over 13 hard but great years

1: Have fun.

My five-year-old loves our absurd morning routine. I lie down on her mattress on the floor and massage her to awaken. When she is ready – a long time – she stretches her feet out, stomach down. I drag her to my room, pick her up by the feet and flop her on her back on my bed, her blankets still firmly in her hand, and bring her clothes. It is totally silly, but we get out of the door on time for the bus.

2: But don't complain.

As noted in 30 below, women evolved to get what they need from men by, among other things, complaining. We men have nobody to complain to. Nobody will care, and it just makes us look weak.

3: Work.

Alex's characterization here is very accurate. Though some exceptional women can balance family and career, it should not be a model and never be assumed. Better to be a good mother than indifferent in two roles.

4: Don't do drugs.

[This video](#) I made about my lifetime experience with drugs skyrocketed me to YouTube fame. Though my message is the same as Alex's— don't do it – what viewers liked was the fact that it was Grandpa telling the story. Almost all the comments, and presumably views as well, were by drug users. That's the audience Berenson must reach. Good luck.

5: Teach your children to respect the Constitution and Bill of Rights,

I am more cynical than Alex. These are 18th century documents that even the authors knew represented an idealized notion of humanity. Edmund Burke was right. What makes a great society is not great documents but the way people treat each other. America is falling away from this Enlightenment ideal, and the English, French and Germans are doing so even more quickly.

In Ukraine because we are mostly just one people. We respect one another. Civility transcends what is written on paper.

6: Read

Reading serves an interesting function. We remember Calvin's dad, of Calvin and Hobbes, rebelling at being asked to read Hamster Huey and the Gooey Kabloolie over again every night. Yes, kids want to do that.

They don't care if they don't understand all the words. They will never ask if Calvin uses the word "serendipitous." They don't remember the names of the characters even after five readings. Let it go! They love being close and hearing your voice. It is likewise of little use asking them to discuss the moral of a story or deeper issues.

7: Speaking of artificial intelligence,

A blessing of Ukrainian schools! Our kids don't appear to make much use of AI. My 14-year-old has not mentioned using it for schoolwork. I'm sure that he would be deeper into it if his assignments were in English.

8: Find a few games that are your family's games.

We do jigsaws, exactly as Alex says. The kids do Uno. They have a new game called Carcassonne, which they love and I don't know.

9: Once your kids are past seven or so, don't just let them beat you when you are playing games with them

I've given up on chess. They won't read chess books or even learn from online sites. It is Hobson's choice: demoralize them by beating them or play stupidly. Better just to avoid it.

10: Drive carefully;

I hated ferrying my first family around strapped into car seats like sacks of potatoes while I paid attention to the road. I take my young family by bus when I can. I can give them my full attention, and point out polite and obnoxious behavior and attractive or inappropriate dress. This morning my five-year-old corrected my pronunciation as I read Puss in Boots in Ukrainian.

11: Make sure your children understand the basics of budgeting

As Alex says, they have to understand limits. They will not get everything they want, and bugging Dad is not the way to get things.

12: Be positive.

The kids ask whether to be scared of the Russians. My wife will often relay her own fears after talking to friends. I have to explain that we live a couple of miles from anything the Russians would target. Life entails risk. Even for Ukrainians in Charlotte, NC.

13: If you believe in God, make sure to tell your kids that.

There is a great demand from all quarters for highly intelligent people to fill cubicles. The pay is enticing. American schools [have favored girls](#) and pushed them into careers, which often renders girls unfit and unwilling to be wives and mothers and discourages boys from fighting a system that is stacked against them.

Traditional religious concepts of morality and the roles of men and women are very important in forming children.

14 thru 16: Reject "gentle parenting."

Alex addresses this at great length. It ties in with his take on Therapy, No. 41 below, and the attitudes of the AWFUL (Affluent, white, female, urban and liberal) women that dominate his New York world and my former world of Bethesda. Kids need to learn by hard knocks.

17: Don't scare your kids about existential, future of humanity issues.

Don't let society scare them either. American schools teach them about global warming, the evils of the patriarchy, the historical mistreatment of Blacks, Indians and whoever, the [coming great extinctions](#) and so on. I am pleased to say that these are not on the agenda of schools in Ukraine. There is far less propaganda to be undone.

18: But do scare your kids about drugs (and alcohol).

Absolutely. My kids know that I gave up smoking and drinking and [have tried drugs](#). They hear that all are stupid. They saw their grandfather, younger than me their father, die of smoking and drinking.

Berenson does not connect the dots as he rails against drowning kids in drugs to treat ADHD. My 44-year-old son is living on the streets, suffering from a number of conditions on the autism spectrum that are consistent with vaccine injury as reported by [Aaron Siri](#), [Paul Thomas](#) and others.

19: You won't have much to do during the first few months of your first child's life

[Gavin deBecker](#) says that a father has a vital role in the first months of life – protecting the newborn from pediatricians who will want to immediately inject Vitamin K and Hep B shots, often giving mom pressure and sometimes without asking.

20. Halloween is for your kids, not for you.

Stay out of it.

21: Time outdoors is good time.

Just walking is important. An advantage of taking the bus is that they have to at least walk to and from bus stops.

We bought a house near a lake to which the kids can walk to swim in the summer, on quiet roads where even the five-year-old can bike safely. With a helmet, of course.

22: Getting angry with your kids is acceptable,

Expressing anger is different than being angry. Shouting is sometimes necessary. So is spanking. You can do both yet keep control. The kids and you both know it is controlled means of delivering a needed message.

23: Don't make empty threats for misbehavior

Not following through on your threats confuses children and diminishes their respect for you. Do not make threats unless you mean it. And when you do mean it, act. Do not worry about being wrong. They will forgive.

24: Have more than one kid, if at all possible.

Very good advice. Among other things it teaches you humility.

There is a saying that parents of a single child believe it is all environment. Parents to two or more know it is genetics. Judith Rich Harris wrote two wonderful books, [Nature vs. Nurture](#) and [No Two Alike](#), on how children develop. Also look at Alison Gopnik's [The Gardener and the Carpenter](#).

This is a good point to mention the inheritance of intelligence. Research on the subject is rather scant. The best scholars are polymath Stephen Hsu and James Flynn. See [this video](#) summarizing their findings.

25: Don't be upset if your kids laugh at you.

Encourage it! A great sense of humor is one of the best gifts a child can have.

26: Encourage your kids to play competitive team sports, whether or not they are good.

They need to get some exercise. Sports are a part of a kid's culture. Here in Ukraine, there is only one major sport, soccer, here called football. They also play tennis and do gymnastics, but without the same emphasis.

I encourage my kids to swim and bicycle. Get outdoors and keep moving. I set the example myself.

27: Don't lie.

Ridiculous answers are better than lies. When my daughter asks how much I make, the answer is \$53.41. She knows that is not right. The figure is absurd. But she also knows that she will not get the right answer.

They will plague you endlessly for sweets or TV time. The answer is no. They invariably ask "Why?" The answer is "Because no!" When they say, "That's not an answer." I reply "Yes, it is. All the answer you are going to get."

28: Be charitable, and make charity a part of your kids' lives.

Real charity is hard to do. Witness the disastrous evolution of the Ford Foundation, MacArthur Foundation, Rockefeller and Carnegie foundations into woke piggybanks.

I volunteered overseas with Habitat for Humanity for five summers 1998-2002. It was an opportunity to give money to deserving people, yes, but also to travel, speak Spanish and Portuguese, learn useful building skills and other cultures. My kids and I traveled and gave money to, projects in Nicaragua, Peru, Honduras and Haiti.

29: Set rules for bedtime and stick to them.

We set our bedtime at 9:00, knowing it will be honored in the breach. They are usually asleep by 10:00.

30: As you know, this guide is about fatherhood, not marriage.

Men and women are different. The thought is expressed in many ways. One is "Men do, women are."

Men and women [evolved to fill different roles](#). Men are the protectors and providers. Leaders and decision makers. Women, as Alex says, are the comforters, healers and homemakers.

Throughout evolutionary history women were somewhat like property. Spoils of war. They got what they needed from men, by asking, pleading, begging, wheedling, nagging, complaining, charming or whatever it took.

Women who succeeded in getting what they needed for themselves and their children passed along genes supporting these behaviors. Men who responded by providing passed on their genes.

This has severe implications. Women will ask for the impossible. They just might get it. They always want their way, but when things go wrong, it is the guy's fault.

31, Take your children grocery shopping.

They need to learn to interact with the clerks. Also, take them on the bus. It gives you time to talk, and they observe humanity.

32, Get a dog.

Or something. We feed feral cats on our back porch and watch with fascination as the hedgehogs push them aside and take what they want.

33. Yes, your kids need chores.

This is difficult but important. Making it work is at the top of our to-do list. And has been for a long time.

34, Don't be a clotheshorse or worry too much about your looks.

Looks are important to a woman. She should be natural. No bee-sting, duck lips. No Botox or silicon. Dress modestly and neatly. Avoid trends. Avoid Lady Gaga. A man is attracted to a woman who looks comfortable in her own skin. Who attracts rather than demands attention.

A woman's most attractive features are a pleasant face, graceful movement and a trim figure. Fifty-some years ago my French girlfriend Lilianne told me that a proper Parisienne can look becoming in a flour sack.

35: But do stay in shape.

As I write this review, at 83, I am still able to run with the girls to catch buses, swim in our local river, and outwalk them. I have never been much of an athlete, but have faithfully used an exercise bike.

Don't complain. Complaining is for women. They do it naturally, all the time. A dad should be stoic. I acknowledge that I don't run as fast as I used to. Just do it.

36: Speaking of aging, build the strongest possible relationship between your children and your (and your spouse's) parents.

The kids learn respect. They also learn about foibles. Older people are quirky.

Grandpa lived with us the last year of his life. The kids got to observe how he retreated into alcohol as Grandma nagged him about everything. They also learned to appreciate hearing his stories of growing up in Siberia, and Grandma's about her kulak grandparents who were killed in the Holodomor.

In the end, there are lessons to be learned, both good and bad. The kids need to show respect, pay attention, and learn.

37: Let your children know the transgender nonsense is exactly that.

Do not underestimate the power of the schools and popular culture to encourage children to try homosexuality.

Some of my American family's playmates had effete mannerisms by the age of ten and turned out gay. But not nearly as many as later found it fashionable. Don't be afraid to emphasize what normalcy is. By the way, none of the children in my kids' Ukrainian schools identify as gay. The gays in society are mostly quite open, not stigmatized. But being gay is not celebrated as "a thing" in school. Nor is sex in general. They are there to study.

Gays have always attempted to seduce boys. See the 1950s NAMBLA, referenced above. Warn your boys.

Love is something that teenagers have never understood well. I will tell my daughters not to let anybody tell them who they ought to love - male or female.

We need to downplay sex. The great mystery. The grand allure. Tell them that everybody learns the wisdom of old songs. Peggy Lee singing "Is that all there is?" Joni Mitchell singing "Clouds." Love and sex are different things, and love changes over time. It is a matter of respect. Marriage is marriage, whether arranged or for love. It takes work and respect.

The misconception that sex and love are the same thing will lead to a lot of disappointment. It is vitally important that a girl have a solid, committed relationship before sex enters into it. The way it used to be, as I write in this review of [Pride and Prejudice](#).

38: If you've read this far, you probably know this already, but the point is worth making explicitly: Time is the most precious currency you have with your kids

See Judith Rich Harris [Nature vs. Nurture](#) and [No Two Alike](#) about how children become who they are. She contends that parents' greatest influence comes through choosing their children's environment. The town and neighborhood. The schools. Churches. In my case, the country of Ukraine. It is hard to overstate how safe and traditional Kyiv is in comparison to Bethesda.

39: Speaking of phones: Do not let your kids have phones or tablets until as late as possible,

We found a 20-year-old Nokia. Adequate.

40: Cook dinner now and again.

Our kids cook all the time. They beg to help. My son makes great sushi. The girls make cookies. I have told them that I am out of the pancake business – I will remind them how, but they need to do it themselves.

41: Avoid therapy at all costs.

Every member of my failed first family had lots of therapy. The successful children of my present family have no idea even what it is.

I tried it myself. They gave me Prozac. Wrong! What cured my depression was a divorce. I threw the Prozac in the toilet after about three months.

42: *Don't be afraid to let your kids know when they've taught you something.*

My five-year-old is teaching me Ukrainian as she herself learns to read. We both laugh at my terrible pronunciation and her attempts to fix it. But... she is learning to read.

43: *Encourage your kids to become sports fans*

This is an American thing. Soccer is our only professional sport. Kids like to play, but it is not a huge thing. We root for the Ukrainian army.

44: *Be aware of their cultural references,*

Music really was better in the '50s. Just this morning my 8-year-old put on the Coasters to hear Charlie Brown and Yakity-yak. She asked me to replay Frankie Laine's "Tell me a story." My kids enjoy learning traditional Ukrainian singing and dancing

45: *don't spend a lot of time commenting on or complimenting your children's appearance*

Our girls' fancy clothes are Ukrainian vyshyvankas – traditional dress they can wear when singing and dancing. Mom has a few very nice ones, and as well the figure and the grace to wear them well. It is a way for the girls to look good and express who they are all at once.

46: *Do talk about politics and current events with them, though.*

My kids know what I think and why I think it. About global warming, the Russians, vaccines, men and women, gays, social media. But they also know that I am open to discuss anything and respect their opinions.

47: *Make clear that bullying is unacceptable.*

With girls, the issue is bossiness more than bullying. At any rate, they hear about it frequently.

48: *Do not "snowplow" for your kids at school or on teams*

Alex is right on target with this one. I have a 68-year-old friend whose helicopter mother hovered over him in the 1970s. His father had become a third-line-manager at IBM, but deferred to mom. The son "never launched." Never married, never had a career.

49: *Travel.*

Our kids travel for cultural events - singing and dancing festivals and such. They get exposure to Polish and Hungarian. They see the countryside from a train.

50: *Let your kids explore on their own.*

In a safe city like Kyiv, it is normal for my 8-year-old daughter to ride the bus to school. Immensely freeing. Though they are intricately tied to kids' freedom and safety, Berenson's fifty points assiduously avoid questions of diversity. But The fact that everybody on public transit is a Ukrainian, and Ukrainians will defend other people's children, is vastly important.

I love it when grandmothers scold me for letting my daughters stand too close to the edge of the metro platform or underdress for the weather. They care! I accept their advice, good or bad, with good humor.

Berenson, who was incredibly brave and on target in taking on the huge Covid establishment, does not mention the equally powerful and nefarious pediatric and educational establishments. The American Pediatric Association employs Mafia-like techniques to squelch doctors who question childhood vaccines. It turns out that giving shots is a major source of income for pediatricians, and any who would break the rice bowl by questioning them, such as [Paul Thomas](#), are severely punished. All you will hear from the establishment is "safe and effective." The same lie as they used with covid. Berenson should caution parents to do their own research. The doctors are brainwashed and compromised.

The corruption of the K-12 educational establishment – college too, for that matter – has been addressed by many books over the years. Among the best of the early ones [reviewed here](#) were by [John Gatto](#) and [Diane Ravich](#). Almost all teachers in both private and public schools have graduated from teacher's colleges, which are hotbeds of woke sentiment. Many belong to the equally woke, and controlling, American Federation of Teachers and National Education Association. Though Berenson is in no position to home school, its phenomenal growth is testimony to the fact that public schools, especially in blue states, are doing

an abysmal job. Some Catholic, evangelical and Jewish schools manage still to offer a good education. A parent has to care a lot and find out who to ask.

It is wonderful to see a brave, talented and prolific taking on the most important issue of our age – raising the next generation. This is certainly a five-star effort.