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Westlake author self publishes book for parents

By [Alicia Doyle](#)

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COURTESY PHOTO

Bette Alkazian of Westlake Village is the author of "Parenting Backwards."

Bette Alkazian of Westlake Village believes many parents are raising their children without thinking about the future impact of their choices.

Based on this belief, Alkazian wrote "Parenting Backwards," a book that introduces her philosophy about parenting that begins with the end in mind.

"It is my goal to inspire parents to parent with intention and goals," said Alkazian, 46, a licensed marriage and family therapist with a practice in Thousand Oaks. She is also the mother of three daughters, ages 10, 15 and 19. "A business cannot be successful without a set of goals or a clear mission. I believe that parents can be equally successful by knowing what their goals are and heading toward them in each moment with their kids."

Self-published in October and edited by Karyn Blackmore-Hagy, "Parenting Backwards" is the result of many years of working with families, Alkazian said.

In her psychotherapy practice, she specializes in working with parents to improve the lives of their families, increase their confidence as parents, and teach them how to improve their children's behavior by instilling healthy values.

"I saw certain patterns emerge over and over and wanted to address them in writing," said Alkazian. The book was also inspired by parents who approached her during Coffee with Bette at Chocolatine in Thousand Oaks, an open forum on the first Tuesday of each month in which she answers parenting questions. "I heard over and over, 'How can I take you home with me?' This book was inspired by the wonderful parents with whom I've worked in recent years."

Alkazian said that although she wrote the “parenting how-to book” with parents of toddlers to young teens in mind, “most of the tools apply to parenting kids of all ages, including adult children. Ideally, I think parents should read this book before their first child is born so they begin with a solid foundation from day one.”

Ultimately, her hope is to inspire adults to be aware of the consequences of their own choices and to teach their kids the same. “When parents are aware of their own behaviors and feelings, they can teach their kids to be aware of themselves and to make good choices,” Alkazian said. “I want the kids of today to do the right thing for the right reasons, not because they’re afraid of getting in trouble. They should be more afraid of suffering the potential consequences of their choices. That’s how kids make good choices even when they’re not being watched.”

Kids don’t come with an instruction manual, and most parents just shoot from the hip while raising their kids, she said. “Then, we all hope it all works out for the best. My feeling is that we have to have a philosophy from which to draw when making the best decisions for our kids. This book puts into words what many parents already believe and it gives them a framework for their parenting from beginning to end.”

To buy a copy of “Parenting Backwards,” visit <http://www.balancedparenting.com>.

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