

Family Connections Newsletter

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Parenting Tips Every Parent Needs

There are no perfect parents, but there are plenty of things you can do that will make you a fantastic one. Here are a few tips you can try out with your kids to help with current or future challenges, start new traditions or habits, and help your child's social and emotional skills.

For the full list, visit parents.com and search '50 Easy Way to Be a Fantastic Parent'.

Set Smart Limits



Take charge

Children crave limits, which help them understand and manage an often confusing world. Set boundaries so your kids can explore and discover safely.

Don't try to fix everything

Give kids a chance to find their own solutions. When you acknowledge their frustrations without immediately rushing to save them, you teach them self-reliance and resilience.

Pick your battles

Focus on things that really matter like no hitting, rude talk, or lying. Forget about the little stuff like fashion choices.

Create Quality Time

Read together every day

Start when they're a newborn; babies love listening to the sounds of your voice. Cuddling up with a book is a great bonding experience that will set them up for a lifetime of reading.

Schedule daily special time

Let your child choose an activity where you hang out together for 10-15 minutes with no interruptions. There no better way to show your love.

Make warm memories

Your children will not remember everything you say to them, but they will recall family rituals - like game nights and family dinner.



Be a Good Role Model

Fess up when you blow it

This is the best way to show your child how and when they should apologize.

Be the role model your kids deserve

Kids learn by watching. Modeling appropriate, respectful behavior works much better than telling them what to do.

Respect parenting differences

Support your co-parent's basic approach - unless it's way out of line. Criticizing and arguing with each other will do harm to your relationship and child's sense of security.

Always tell the truth

It's how you want your kids to behave, right?

Trust Yourself

Trust your gut

No one knows your child better than you. Follow your instincts when it comes to their health and well-being. If you think something's wrong, chance are you're right.

Give yourself a break

Hitting the drive-thru when you're too tired to cook doesn't make you a bad parent.

Just say "no"

Resist the urge to take on extra obligations at the office or become a constant volunteer at your child's school. You will never, ever regret spending more time with your kids.

Teach Social Skills

Ask 3 "you" questions everyday

The art of conversation is an important social skill, but parents often neglect to teach it. Get kids going with questions like, "What was your favorite part of school today?"; "Where do you want to go tomorrow afternoon?"

Teach kids this bravery trick

Tell them to always notice the color of a person's eyes. Making eye contact will help a hesitant child appear more confident, be more assertive, and less likely to be picked on.

Acknowledge their strong emotions

When the meltdown is over, ask them, "How did that feel?" and "What would make it better?" Then listen to them.



Raise Grateful Kids

Talk about being a good person

Start early: When you read bedtime stories, ask your toddler whether the characters are being mean or nice and explore why.

Explain why values are important

The simple answer: when you're kind, generous, honest, and respectful, you make the people around you feel good. You also make yourself feel good.

Show how to be a responsible citizen

Find ways to help others all year. Kids gain a sense of self-worth by volunteering in the community.

Visit [volunteermatch.org](https://www.volunteermatch.org) to find opportunities locally for the whole family!

Don't Stress about Dinner

Serve a food again and again

If your child rejects a new dish, don't give up. You may have to offer it another six, eight, or even 10 times before they eat it and decide whether they like it.

Eat at least one family meal every day

Sitting down together is a relaxed way for everyone to connect - a time to share happy news, talk about the day, or tell a silly joke. It also helps kids develop healthy eating habits.

Avoid food fights

Kids know instinctively how much to eat. If they refuse to finish what is on their plate, just let it go. They won't starve!

Let your kids place an order

Once a week, let your kids choose what's for dinner and cook it for them.

Always Say "I Love You"

Say "I love you" whenever you feel it

You simply cannot spoil a child with too many mushy words of affection and too many smooches. Not possible!

Keep in mind what grandmas always say

Children are not yours, they are only lent to you for a time. In those fleeting years, do your best to help them grow up to be good people.

Savor the moments

Yes, parenthood is the most exhausting job on the planet. Yes, your house is a mess, the laundry's piled up, and the dog needs to be walked. But your kids just laughed. Enjoy it!

Love them equally...

But treat them uniquely! They're individuals.



WE VALUE YOUR FEEDBACK!

Let us know how you are liking the newsletter. Take this month's survey at:
<https://forms.gle/xioXtZnc2uwQ3Eav6>



May Photo Challenge

The weather has finally broken and spring has sprung! Take a walk around the neighborhood or visit a local park and take some pictures as you go.

Pictures to take...

- Birds
- Flowers
- Clouds
- Your family
- Animals
- Something yellow
- A sign
- Triangle-shaped object
- Grass growing
- Something pink
- Lawnmower

MAY FUN IN THE QC AREA

- 4 | 2nd Annual Cinco de Mayo Taco & Margarita Festival | Runners Park (East Moline)
- 4 | Monster Jam | Vibrant Arena
- 11 | Fishing Derby | Middle Park Lagoon (Bettendorf)
- 11-12 | Beaux Arts 2022 Spring Art Fair | Mississippi Valley Fairgrounds
- 14 | Sesame Street LIVE! Say Hello | Adler Theatre
- 15 | Kids Anime Club | Moline Public Library
- 18 | Summer Kickoff Concert 2024 | Schwiebert Riverfront Park
- 25 | Touch-A-Truck & Ice Cream Social | Behind Frank's Pizza (Silvis)
- 27: Mercado on Fifth Summer Marker - Mercado on Fifth, Moline, IL

Please check with each site as events are subject to change



BREAKFAST POPSICLES

Ingredients:

- 1 large banana
- 1 cup Greek yogurt
- 1/2 cup milk (any flavor, regular, or lactose-free)
- 1/2 cup dry cereal

Instructions:

1. In a mixing bowl, mix the banana on medium until mashed and smooth with the paddle attachment
2. Slowly add in yogurt and milk. Continue mixing until blended.
3. Add cereal and stir by hand to avoid crushing it
4. Pour into popsicle molds.
5. Freeze for 8 hours or until solid

*Use any combinations of flavored milk and cereal. Chocolate milk with Cocoa Puffs, white milk with Captain Crunch or Cheerios, strawberry with fruit loops - the possibilities are endless!



FUN MOTHER'S DAY ACTIVITIES

- Family Game Night
- Get crafty! Make a card, scrapbook page, painting, candle, or jewelry
- Visit the Farmer's Market
- Plant a garden or flower bed
- Make a playlist of songs that remind you of your mom
- Go for a walk
- Go to the botanical center
- Make her a special meal and dessert
- Write her a special note
- Tell her you love her!



Mother's Day

WORD SCRAMBLE

1. SFOEWRL _____
2. MHORET _____
3. UALFIEBTU _____
4. SISSEK _____
5. SUHG _____
6. LAMYFI _____
7. LOHIDYA _____
8. ECRDNIHL _____
9. FRUETGAL _____
10. PCSIAEL _____

1. Flowers 2. Mother 3. Beautiful 4. Kisses 5. Hugs 6. Family 7. Holiday 8. Children 9. Grateful 10. Special

Cheesecake stuffed strawberries

Ingredients:

- 1 pint strawberries
- 8 oz cream cheese
- 1/3 cup powdered sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 Tbsp heavy cream
- 1 Tbsp heavy cream
- 1/3 cup graham cracker crumbs
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1/2 Tbsp melted butter

Directions:

1. Wash strawberries, cut green top out at a slant
2. In mixing bowl, add cream cheese, powdered sugar, vanilla, heavy cream. Mix until creamy.
3. Put mixture in piping bag (can make one with a sandwich bag) and fill each strawberry with filling
4. In small bowl, stir together graham cracker crumbs, sugar, and melted butter
5. Dip tops of strawberries in crumb mix
6. Serve immediately or store in the fridge

ATTENTION MILITARY PARENTS!

If you are a military parent - meaning you are active, retired, or a guard member - you are invited to be a part of our monthly **CAMO & Kids** activities! Each month we plan an activity specifically for children and their military parent. Twice a year we open these activities up to the whole family! All events are **FREE** and are at different community venues. Past outings have been fishing, ice skating, Camp Abe Lincoln, Elevate, and many more. To learn more about the next activity email Jennifer Kerr at jennifer.a.kerr10.civ@army.mil or BrookeHendrickx@foreverychild.org.