

Dirty little parenting secrets

What are your "dirty" secrets as a parent?
(We know you have them, too.)

Facebook posts may show the glowing moments of life and parenting, but that doesn't mean that any caregivers have it completely together.

All parents have "dirty" secrets – here are a few of these honest parenting moments.

Pizza is the healthiest thing my kid has eaten all day.

Food can be a battle for some children - and there are days that you just can't force another carrot or banana on your kids. You don't have the energy for the fight.

Remember that healthy eating habits may not happen overnight, but your hard work to provide healthy meals for your kids matters.

And give yourself a break for the days that pizza and cookies are on the menu.

Because everyone (including you) needs a treat now and then, and developing good eating habits is all about moderation.



My child hasn't bathed in a week.

Bathtime isn't always fun and games.

Some kids hate it and fight baths (and water in their eyes) tooth and nail. Some days (or weeks) get so busy for families that bath time is all but forgotten. And maybe as a parent, you just can't muster the energy to get the kids into the bath at the end of the day.

It's really okay. Children don't actually need a daily bath when they are young. In fact, The American Academy for Dermatology recommends kids get a bath only once or twice weekly. (Kids only need baths more frequently if they are dirty, have body odor, or have been swimming.)

Playing with my kids is so boring.

Not every parent loves playing tag, trains or dolls. The activities that kids love can be boring and even annoying for adults. Because your kids are in a different developmental stage than you.

You don't have to love it, but playing with your kids can help your kids feel loved. To beat the boredom

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blues, try finding activities you both enjoy to make it equally enjoyable. (A few ideas: Nature hikes, reading books, board games or riding bikes.)

My house looks like a tornado hit.

Very few houses look like the photos gracing the pages of House Beautiful (or Pinterest, for that matter).

Here's a reality check:

- If your living room is filled with toys and baskets of laundry, you are normal.
- If your sink is filled with dishes, you are normal.
- If you just found a half-full cup of spoiled milk behind your couch, you are normal.
- And if your house is clean and lovely, you are normal, too. (And we want your tips.)

Basically, having a perfect home doesn't make you the perfect parent. And having a messy home doesn't mean something's wrong with your parenting either.

My kids live for screen time.

We are parenting in the technology age. That means our kids have access to television, tablets, apps and games that we never imagined.

This can be a huge advantage for this generation of young people - but it does come with risks. Don't beat yourself up if your child begs to watch television or play games on the tablet. Many kids do. But as the caregiver, it's your job to help keep them safe and find ways to find balance.

My child's clothes never match.

As a parent, there are things that matter and there are things that don't. As long as your child has clothing that keeps them protected from the elements, you're doing your job.

If someone has a problem with your child matching, it's their issue and not yours. Allowing your child to choose his or her clothing gives them the opportunity to become more self-reliant and express creativity.

That means you're helping your child grow into a functioning adult. Which is a win!

I just lost my temper with my child.

Raising kids is not easy. There will be days that you feel like you are at the end of your rope.

When you lose your temper:

Ask for support.

You may just need an hour (or two) to collect yourself. Rely on your family, friends or partner while you have some time to yourself.

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Ask for forgiveness.

Your kids look to you as an example. It's normal to get angry, but show your child that it's also important to apologize when it's necessary.

Ask for help.

If you have a hard time controlling your anger, it's time to ask for help. There are experts that can help you find better ways to deal with your anger and get through tough situations as a parent. (And there's no better reason to get help than to be a better parent.)

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Every parent has dirty little secrets. But as it turns out, many of them aren't so dirty, after all.

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Originally posted on the Now What? Blog 5/2/16. The Now What? Blog served for nearly 7 years to

- 1. Normalize parents seeking support and help as a manner of child abuse prevention*
- 2. Engage community in how they can work to prevent child abuse*
- 3. Work to build resiliency in families through promotion of the 5 protective factors*

Maybe you coach a baseball team or you help care for the neighbor kids from time to time. You are investing in the safety and security of the children in our community. Because it truly does take a village to raise our children, we want to offer the tools needed to bring awareness and education to preventing child abuse.

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