

PARENTING TIPS

The place where moms can come to get fun ideas for their kids and learn some "Hints and Tips" that can help make parenting a little easier.

Ways to help build your child's self-esteem:

1. Know that God's love is absolutely unconditional and it never fails.

2. Let them know it's okay to make a mistake.

Encourage them to talk with you about it so they can learn how to correct the mistake. Maybe even discuss what can be done so it doesn't happen again.

3. Teach them it's okay to be different! Everyone is different in many ways. Discuss how. Be affirming.

4. If someone makes fun of them because they are different in some way, show them how it is the other person's problem. **If your child makes fun of or tries to upset others because they are different in some way,** it becomes their (your child's) problem.

5. No one can hurt them by calling them names or saying mean things about them unless they give them permission to do so. In other words, "I don't have to give them the power to upset me."

6. Teach them the fullness of love by example!

JUST FOR BABY / TODDLER

Keep a spiral notebook (Steno pad) in a convenient location to jot notes...anything and everything your little ones say or do that captures your heart at that moment. The entries will be priceless. Date each entry for remembrance. (It's also a quick way to record events so you can later transfer the information to a Keepsake Calendar or your child's baby book.)

If you don't have one already, purchase an audio cassette player/recorder to record your baby's coos and parent/baby "conversations" (later, their first words). A great place to keep it is at the changing table where most conversations take place. Just push the button and record away! What you get on tape will be priceless and something you can never capture again. Guaranteed!

Little ones refusing naps? Try this... tell your child he needs to lay down for a while (let them see you set a timer- in a different room from their bedroom) and tell him, "I don't want you to go to sleep." Emphasize "Now, don't go to sleep." Chances are, they will fall asleep in no time at all. (Extend the timer a little bit longer each time he gets up to play.)

HEALTHY CHILD

Do you have a child with eczema or other skin problems? He could be sensitive/allergic to contact lotions or perfumes, but more than likely is reacting to detergent residue in his clothes. Easy remedy: run your child's clothes through a second rinse and pour 1 cup of white vinegar into the rinse water. It works!

When your child gets a minor injury and is crying, get him to be a part of the clean-up process. Have him blow on the boo-boo while you clean and bandage. It's hard to blow and cry at the same time.

Regularly measure your child's height and keep track of the growth on a fixed board or paper. Your child's birthday is a good time to do this.

We all need to be EXTREMELY aware of what we're doing when our kids are around us. We've witnessed parents spraying "vegetable food spray" or other aerosols with the child sitting or standing right there. This can be dangerous. An unassuming mom once heavily sprayed her hair (of course, with hairspray) when her child was in close proximity and the child nearly suffocated from inhaling the sticky droplets of spray. True story. And, PLEASE, do everything you can to prevent your child from inhaling second-hand smoke (whether it's yours or when you're out in public.) Every child has a right to be healthy and they're looking up to you to make the best decisions for them! They depend on you for their safety and setting a good example to live a healthy life.



KITCHEN

Give each child his or her own colored cup, i.e.. Brendan always uses a blue cup, David's is green, and Katie's is red. They can keep their own color all the time. You might even buy multiple sets of same-colored cups to have on hand. This prevents squabbles over "it's my cup" and helps prevent germs from spreading during cold and flu season. "It worked GREAT when my boys were growing up!"

QUICK PEANUT BUTTER RECIPES YOUR KIDS CAN MAKE (or help you make) - (Do NOT give if your child is ALLERGIC TO PEANUTS or other kinds of nuts, including peanut by-products.)

Mash 1/2–1 banana. Add some creamy peanut butter (as long as your child doesn't have allergies to peanut butter) and honey. Stir it up and spread on a slice of whole-wheat bread or crackers.

Spread peanut butter on one half of a whole-wheat hamburger bun. Place one pineapple slice on top with a slice of cheese on top of the pineapple. Put a maraschino cherry in the middle of the cheese and microwave on high for 30 seconds. Let cool. Yummy treat.

PLAYTIME

Have a can of shaving cream on hand with a few little hot wheel cars. Spray the counter top with the shaving cream and let the kids do finger drawings, play tic-tac-toe, or run the cars through it. This is wonderful for you, too, because the shaving cream will also work to clean the counter! Your kids will remember that you played with them on the kitchen counter making a mess!

QUALITY TIME

Spend time with your children before they go to bed at night. This is a perfect time for a bedtime story, prayer, and a quiet song.

Periodically, have special one-on-one "dates" with each of your children. Go to breakfast or do something your child will enjoy.

Establish traditions that your family will look forward to, like Mom cooking pancakes every Saturday morning or Dad barbecuing his famous hamburgers

on Friday night.

Work on making scrapbooks together or, at least, periodically go through family pictures and pray for the people in them or reminisce over good times.

There are many wonderful children's books out that kids would love to have someone read to them. Even if they can read, there is just something precious about being read to. Bring a book with you when you go to someone's home that has young children and ask the parents if you could read to their little ones. I doubt they would say no!

Sit at a small table and color or mold play dough with kids using cookie cutters. (Playing with children at eye level is so important.)

Take your children on a nature walk. Have them collect sticks or rocks or whatever catches their eye. Come home and glue them on to construction paper.

Blow bubbles, play jacks, have hoola-hoop contests with your kids.

Take your child's drawings and laminate. Then, they

Always use a child's name when talking with them. Little people like that! Also, let them help, once in awhile, with "big people" jobs around the house.

On good weather days, pack a picnic lunch and go to the park or your own backyard. (Don't forget the blanket!) can use them as placemats.

