



Being a Good Parent: What Does it Mean?

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Being a parent is one of the toughest and yet most fulfilling jobs – it can be tiring most of the time but seeing the little person you take care of happy is very satisfying. Parenting is complicated because there is not one recipe for it and there are a lot of factors that may affect how a parent raises their child – culture, country's law, and their beliefs. You can read a lot about how to be a good parent, or how to raise kids – articles like this may help – but it will always depend on how consistent you are and the relationship you have with your child.

Parents often have an instinct that they know what is better for their child. While this can be true, there will always be areas where they need to ask other people for help and advice, because raising a kid is not as easy as working in an office. A child's personality is not set in stone, and the way you raise your child and take care of them will play a big part in their developing as a person.

Below are some tips to guide you on the challenging path of parenthood:

1. Develop your child's self-esteem – the way you act as a parent affects your child's self-esteem: your manner of talking to them, your body language, and your expressions. Praise your child's accomplishments even if they are small – this will make them feel proud of themselves. Let your child do things on their own to make them feel capable – but be there when they need your help. Avoid comparing your child to anyone, and do not pick on them, unless their behavior affects other people. For example, if your child is too loud in a public space, you can ask them to be more considerate about the people around. Choose your words carefully and be compassionate. Remind your child that it is okay to make mistakes and you will still love them no matter what.
2. Be consistent with how you discipline your child – discipline is important to help children learn self-control. Following sets of rules might be hard for your child, but it is needed for them to grow into responsible adults. Be consistent with your discipline – let your child know that one warning should be enough and that failure to follow it will lead to a consequence such as loss of privileges (no more screen time etc.) Always give the consequence immediately and be consistent with it.
3. Bond with your child – some parents may not have time to bond with their kids because of work and other responsibilities. However, your child will really appreciate it if you spend quality time with them. Even just having meals together or reading

them a story at night will already be bonding. When given attention, kids are much less likely to act out, because that's exactly what they do it for – getting your attention. You can schedule a day every week to spend time together: for example, having a movie or game night. If you do not have a lot of time, then let your kid know that you still care about them by leaving notes or sending messages – even those small efforts will have a beneficial effect on your child.



4. Always talk and communicate – communication is crucial for any relationship, so it must be your priority. Always ask your child about their day and listen to what they have to suggest. If you have to discipline your child, make sure to explain why you do it – it's very important that they understand what they've done wrong. Encourage your child express their emotions through words, in that case they'll be likely express them through their behavior.
5. Be a good role model – children learn through observing how their parents and other adults act. Always think before you act in front of your child because they absorb what they hear and see and imitate behaviors easily. Be aware that your child's eyes are always on you. Make sure they see respect, honesty, tolerance, and kindness.
6. Show your love – guiding and correcting a child is a parent's job. At times, your child might not feel your love when you are correcting their behavior because they might see it differently. When you must correct your child's actions, avoid criticizing and blaming them since that may affect their self-esteem and bring about hard feelings. Instead, strive to nurture and encourage them by explaining how to make

things better. Remind them that although you get mad and set up certain expectations, you still love them no matter what.

Make sure apologize for your mistakes too!

7. Be flexible with your parenting style – as your child grows older, your parenting style may change. Remember that you need to know the situation and environment to change your parenting style. For example, when your child is sick, it will be best to be more permissive and attend to your child's needs, while being authoritative is helpful to ensure your child's safety – setting rules about talking to strangers, etc. Always take the situation and your child's thoughts and emotions into consideration and continue to give guidance, love, encouragement, and proper discipline throughout your parenting.
8. Know your needs and limitations as a parent – no parent is perfect, everyone has their strengths and weaknesses. Recognize what your strong sides are, and work on your weaknesses. But do not let your mistakes eat you up alive. You're human and allowed to falter. It helps to have realistic expectations of oneself. And do not neglect your needs either – this will not make you selfish, remember. "put on your own oxygen mask first!" Your child depends on you and they will benefit from you being in good shape.

How to engage your child in extracurricular activities if they are reluctant about it

Most parents would want their child to become successful, they see extracurricular activities as one way to achieve it. While this can help your child learn more, pushing them into activities they don't enjoy would be unfair. When forced to do something, a child will hardly excel at it; they will be likely to display indifference and perform poorly.



If you want to encourage your child participate in extracurricular activities, these are the things you can do:

- Ask your child about their interests and go from there. Do not blindly force them to do things that they do not like.
- Talk to your child about extracurricular activities, including the benefits of taking one and responsibilities that come with it. Listen to their opinion and answer their questions.
- Let them have choices and guide them in the decision making process. For example, if your child likes drawing or painting, you can suggest that they take art lessons.
- Communicate with your child – this will make them feel they can trust you and confide in you while making a decision.
- Remember that your kid already has their academics. So it's important not to push them into extremes – make sure they have time to play and have fun too!

All parents are learning day by day, as their kids grow. Do not push yourself too hard. If you feel like you can seek advice when you don't know how to do things, then you are a great parent! While always trying to do what's best for your child, be sure that you are looking after yourself as well.

About the author

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Links and references:

1. <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/nine-steps.html>
2. <https://www.webmd.com/parenting/features/10-commandments-good-parenting>
3. <https://www.verywellfamily.com/things-that-good-parents-do-620051>

