

10 Easy Ways to Be a Fantastic Parent

(Six Part Series-1/6)

Set Smart Limits

- 1. Take charge.** Children crave limits, which help them understand and manage an often confusing world. Show your love by setting boundaries so your kids can explore and discover their passions safely.
- 2. Don't clip your child's wings.** Your toddler's mission in life is to gain independence. So when she's developmentally capable of putting her toys away, clearing her plate from the table, and dressing herself, let her. Giving a child responsibility is good for her self-esteem (and your sanity!).
- 3. Don't try to fix everything.** Give young children a chance to find their own solutions. When you lovingly acknowledge a child's minor frustrations without immediately rushing in to save her, you teach her self-reliance and resilience.
- 4. Remember that discipline is not punishment.** Enforcing limits is really about teaching children how to behave in the world and helping them to become competent, caring, and in control.
- 5. Pick your battles.** Children can't absorb too many rules without turning off completely. Forget arguing about little stuff like fashion choices and occasional potty language. Focus on the things that really matter -- that means no hitting, rude talk, or lying.

Create Your Own Quality Time

- 6. Play with your children.** Let them choose the activity, and don't worry about rules. Just go with the flow and have fun. That's the name of the game.

7. Read books together every day. Get started when he's a newborn; babies love listening to the sound of their parents' voices. Cuddling up with your child and a book is a great bonding experience that will set him up for a lifetime of reading.

8. Schedule daily special time. Let your child choose an activity where you hang out together for 10 or 15 minutes with no interruptions. There's no better way for you to show your love.

9. Encourage daddy time. The greatest untapped resource available for improving the lives of our children is time with Dad -- early and often. Children with engaged fathers do better in school, problem-solve more successfully, and generally cope better with whatever life throws at them.

10. Make warm memories. Your children will probably not remember anything that you say to them, but they will recall the family rituals -- like bedtimes and game night -- that you do together.

Resources:

<http://www.parents.com/parenting/better-parenting/advice/ways-to-be-fantastic-parent/>