

Tips to help kids succeed

Parenting is not an easy job, and it seems there are thousands of ways to do it. With so many parenting books and techniques available, how do you know what works? Sometimes, it helps to go back to the basics. You don't have to be perfect or read every parenting book on the market.

Years of research from medical experts says the following parenting tips will help keep your kids healthy and happy:



BE LOVING. Kids need love every day. Tell them you love them and give hugs and kisses.



GIVE THEM COMFORT. If a child is scared, help them to feel safe. Take steps to protect them and help them cope with fears.



SPEND TIME WITH THEM. Set aside time each day to focus on them, and put the phones and devices away during this time.



POINT OUT GOOD THINGS THEY DO. Be specific. For example, you might say, "I'm really proud of you for cleaning your room without being asked."



BE A GOOD LISTENER. No matter what the topic, kids will feel valued if you look at them and listen to what they say.



USE A ROUTINE. Kids like to know what's coming next. Set times for bed, meals and simple chores to help them feel secure.

Even with the best advice, parents may need help from an expert. This doesn't mean you're a bad parent. Sometimes, talking to someone who can help makes a big difference. If you feel you need help with parenting, try the following resources:

- Your child's pediatrician
- Your own primary doctor
- Local parenting classes at hospitals, schools or community centers
- A family counselor or minister
- Online support groups

Don't be embarrassed to ask for help. It's a sign that you want to be the best parent you can be, and that's a good thing!



FORGIVE MISTAKES. Help them by saying what they could do next time to avoid the mistake. Don't criticize them as a person by saying, "you were bad."



HAVE RULES & STICK TO THEM. Parents, babysitters and other caregivers should follow the same rules. Don't change them or let certain people break them. This only creates confusion and can lead to behavior problems.

