



Top 10 Tips for Good Parenting

By Kelly Nault, M.A.

Even though we need a license to do many things in life-everything from driving and operating a forklift to practicing medicine and fishing-there is no license required when it comes to parenting.

And parenting today is far more difficult and very different than it was only a generation ago. Many well intentioned moms are still using outdated parenting skills and tools that simply do not work consistently. As a result, these moms experience frustration, stress and 'mommy guilt' on a daily basis!

Fortunately, there is an approach to parenting development that consistently makes effective, good parenting a reality. I call it "Ultimate Parenting". This time-tested, child-proofed approach brings out your very best so you can bring out the best in your children!

Does "Good Parenting" Really Exist?

Good parenting does exist, but it is, unfortunately, not the norm.

Normally, well-meaning parents struggle with their children's common behavior problems using discipline techniques that deliver inconsistent results and fail to teach children how to learn from their mistakes. **Many commonly used forms of discipline and punishment actually lead to more misbehavior and only teach children to not get caught next time!**

For me (and the moms I counsel), **good parenting is about bringing out the very best in your children using techniques that teach them respect, responsibility and compassion.**

Top 10 Tips for Good Parenting

The key to parenting success? Start following these top 10 parenting tips below and you will actually motivate your children to want to be well behaved!

Tip #1 - If you love your kids-put yourself first!

Far too many children are living with a mom who is unhappy, frazzled and stressed out. Children flourish when they are raised in a home with happy, balanced parents. The best way to give more to your children is by giving more to yourself: by doing this, you can become a valuable role model for them of a happy, healthy adult.

Giving more to you also means you'll be able to give more to your family. "But I don't have time!" I hear many moms whine. We all have 24 hours in a day, and we all need to make wise choices that put the main priorities in our life first. If we are repeatedly burning the midnight oil, we may be on the brink of burnout-not a pleasant event for you or your family.

Tip #2 - If you are married-put your marriage before your kids!

Most of us have heard of Generation X and Generation Y. But did you realize that Generation S-Generation Spoiled-is on the rise? Many children today are raised with an unhealthy sense of entitlement because their family has made them the center of the universe. And with divorce statistics still hovering at 50%, children are far too often coping with unhappy, failing marriages.

A key to good parenting is to have a happy marriage in which your children can thrive-a partnership which they can use as a model for their future relationships. Take a stand and put some time into your marriage-for your family's sake!

Tip #3 - Cherish your children.

No matter what your situation-no matter how often your children drive you crazy-know there are thousands of women in this world who would gladly trade places with you in a heartbeat. There are women who would give anything to have a child period. Strive to remember how truly fortunate you are.

Hug your children at least three times a day. Tell them often how grateful you are to have the opportunity to be their parent and to become a better woman-and mother-for it!

Tip #4 - Teach your kids to fish (rather than fish for them).

Many moms (and dads) do everything for their kids. This only robs their children of the opportunity to learn self-reliance-a vital key to their self-esteem. One of the best things you can do is to help your kids learn how to do for themselves.

Chapter seven of my award winning book, ***When You're About to Go Off The Deep End, Don't Take Your Kids With You***, is called "How To Get Your Kids Doing Their Chores Smiling". Some parents think I am from another planet when I even suggest that kids can learn to do chores with a smile on their face. But then they are happily amazed when they see it is possible. Keeping house (washing dishes, doing laundry, housecleaning, etc.) can teach them basic life skills everyone needs to know. And chores give children the opportunity to contribute to the household in a positive way. Watch your kids flourish when you guide them to contribute in meaningful ways to you and your family!

Tip #5 - Focus on what you like (instead of what you don't like).

If children aren't being appreciated and aren't getting attention for what they do well-and when they behave well-you better believe they will learn to get attention for not behaving well!

The more you notice what you like about what they're doing, the more you will inspire your child to repeat their good behaviors and achievements.

Tip #6 - Give respect and respect it in return.

Don't do anything to your child that you wouldn't want your child to do to you. The list of things you don't want to be doing includes yelling, hitting, spitting, making fun of people and putting others down. There are far better ways for you to handle conflict, stress and common misbehaviors. Commit to learning these "Ultimate Parenting" tools that are based on mutual respect.

Tip #7 - A family that plays together stays together!

Have fun-play with your kids! Laughing, tickling, and playing together is the foundation of a

happy home. Having fun can go a long way in providing your family with much needed quality time and in preventing much of the needless conflict and behaviors that drive you crazy. Children who experience a regular dose of quality time with their parents do not need to act out to get their attention.

Tip #8 - Pick your fights wisely and fight honorably.

Kids need to feel in control of certain areas of their life. They also need boundaries. Create family rules but ensure that there is flexibility too. For instance a family rule might be that the common areas of the home need to be clean before bed, but the tidiness of the children's room are left up to them (as you can always shut their bedroom door if the lack of order really bugs you). Fights are based upon two people with opposing views-sometimes a third way can be found that works for both you and your child. Look to find this alternate way. If there is no third way agreeable to both you and your child ensure you present your request in a firm but gentle manner. Remember to stay focused on the issue rather than trying to be right!

Tip #9 - Say what you are going to do and stick to it.

Most parents unknowingly teach their kids to not listen to them. If you consistently repeat yourself and then don't follow through on what you've said, you are teaching your kids to ignore you (and especially to ignore you the first time you say you're going to do something). If you are not going to do what you say you are going to do-you are basically teaching your children that your word is muck and can't be trusted. By following through on your word consistently you will begin to pave the road that leads to your children hearing you the first time.

Tip #10 - Find Your G-Spot!

In my book, ***When You're About to Go Off The Deep End, Don't Take Your Kids With You***, I talk about the importance of finding what I call your God-Spot. Whatever higher power you believe in, having faith that things will all work out in the end goes a long way to getting you through those "deep end" moments.

Face it. You are going to mess up some days! There will also be days when you just want to cry. So hang on to your faith. When the unexpected happens, it may be all you have to help you make it through.

Mastering these top 10 parenting tips for good parenting takes time. But the more you learn, the easier and more enjoyable your family life can become. My "**Ultimate Parenting**" approach is really based on common sense-but it achieves uncommon results.

Kelly Nault, MA corporate spokesperson and award winning parenting author of *When You're About To Go Off The Deep End, Don't Take Your Kids With You* inspires moms to put themselves first—for the sake of their children. She shares time-tested tools that motivate children to want to be well behaved, responsible and happy! Sign up for her free online parenting course at www.UltimateParenting.com.

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