



Top 7 Parenting Tips for Good Parenting: Bring Out the Best in You and Your Kids!

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 to become a parent and this is often the trickiest of all of the above activities!

Parenting today is far more difficult than it was, even a generation ago. Many well-intentioned parents are using outdated and ineffective parenting styles. As a result, they experience daily frustration and stress in their home.

Below you will find my top 7 tips for good parenting. These tips inspire children to want to be well behaved, can reduce family fights and boost family joy.

Good Parenting Tip #1 – If you love your kids—put yourself first!

One of the best things we can do for our children is to give them a foundation for becoming a happy and healthy adult. Self-care should not be a luxury for parents—it needs to become a necessity. You need self-care both for being a good parent and a healthy and balanced human being. Far too many children are living with parents who are stressed out and frankly, not at all fun to be around. If you are repeatedly burning the midnight oil, you may be on the brink of parent burnout—not a pleasant thing for you or your family to experience.

Good Parenting Tip #2 – If 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 parents have made them the center of the universe. With divorce statistics still hovering around 50%, children are far too often coping with unhappy, failing marriages and divorce—much worse for them than missing out on a couple of toys or brand name jeans. Take a stand and put some time into your marriage (like go on a date night)—for your whole family's sake!

Good Parenting Tip #3 – Cherish your children

No matter what your situation—no matter how often your children drive you crazy—know there are thousands of people in this world who would gladly trade places with you. There are couples who would give anything to just have a child. Strive to remember how truly fortunate you are. Hug your children at least three times a day. Regularly tell them how grateful you are to have the opportunity to be their parent.

Good Parenting Tip #4 – Teach your kids to fish—don't fish for them!

Many parents do everything for their kids. This only robs their children of the opportunity to learn self-reliance—which is vital to building their self-esteem. One of the best things you can do is to help your kids learn how to do things for themselves. One of the chapters of my first book on effective parenting 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. These same doubting parents are often happily surprised when they see it is possible—in their own home and in this century! Household chores teach basic life skills everyone needs to know. Also, chores give children the opportunity to contribute to the household in a positive and meaningful way.

Good Parenting Tip #5 – Focus on what you like, not on what you don't

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 less likely they are to morph into destructive little terrors and the more likely you will inspire your child to repeat the good behaviors and achievements you love.

Good Parenting Tip #6 – Give respect and expect 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, and put downs. 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—not fear based punishment that only teaches our kids to not get caught next time!

Good Parenting Tip #7 – A family that plays together stays together!

Have fun—play with your kids. Laughing, tickling, and enjoying one another's company is the foundation of a happy home. Having fun can go a long way towards preventing much of the needless conflict and behaviors that drive you crazy. It also provides your family with much needed quality time.

These seven effective parenting tips above are child-proofed, effective and fun. By taking the time to learn how to bring out the best in you and in your children, you will reap the rewards that come from the peace of mind—knowing that you did all you could to support and nurture a happy and healthy family life.

Kelly Nault-Matzen, MA, family counselor, corporate parenting spokesperson and award winning parenting author of *When You're About To Go Off The Deep End, Don't Take Your Kids With You* shares time-tested tools that motivate children to want to be well behaved, responsible and happy! To gain access to more parenting tools and to access your free online parenting course visit www.ultimateparenting.com

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