

Parenting Tips

Are you struggling to get a grip on parenting a preschooler? Try these practical tips to help you develop a positive relationship with your child, laying a foundation for the years ahead.

1. Call your preschooler by his/her name. This shows respect to the child.
2. Say "I love you" to your preschooler several times each day. Be generous with hugs.
3. Say "please" when making a request and "thank you" when the request is completed. Avoid constantly "telling" your child what to do.
4. Be consistent. Follow through when you have made clear what is expected. Use a soft, kind voice. Offer words of praise often.
5. Encourage your child to think. Ask open-ended questions - ones that cannot be answered with yes, no, or one word. For example, "What do you like about the zoo?"
6. Actively listen when your preschooler is talking by getting down on his level and making eye contact. Acknowledge his conversation. Express interest in the child's interests.
7. Encourage your child to use her own words to express her needs or feelings. Example, "I am angry because Jenny hit me," or "May I have some milk, please?"
8. Slow down. Say "no" to too many commitments. Make home and family a priority.
9. Spend time with your preschooler each day doing what he wants to do - playing on the floor, going for a walk, rolling a ball, swinging. Avoid saying, "hurry up" or implying it.
10. Establish routines. Waking up, eating meals, taking naps, and going to bed in his own bed at the same time each day helps a preschooler feel secure.
11. Sit down each day at the table with the TV off for a meal together as a family. Say the blessing before eating.
12. Encourage your child to play outside every day. Physical exercise promotes the total development of your child - physically, socially, emotionally, mentally and spiritually.
13. Read to your preschooler every day. Select books with large print, color pictures, and few words on a page.
14. Avoid competitive sports. Allow your child to grow and develop at his own pace without the pressure of organized competition.
15. Attend church regularly as a family.