

PARENT INSPIRATION

Teaching Christian Values

Live the Values

Living the values you want to teach your children is the most effective and important way to get your point across. As a parent you are always teaching values, whether you want to or not. It happens every day, many times a day, and in many different ways.

Someone has wisely said, **“Children are natural mimics—they act like their parents in spite of every attempt to teach them otherwise!”** The real person is who you are at home. Some days you may wonder, “Is that really me that got so angry?” The pressure of everyday living can get to all of us, but God is equal to any difficult family situation.

When you’re wrong, admit to your children and spouse that you aren’t perfect yet. “I goofed. I’m sorry. Please forgive me.” Admitting your mistakes makes you a real person trying to deal with real problems. Your children will respect you more for being transparent and humble. Children are very forgiving.

The research on modeling clearly points out that **a model is more effective if she briefly explains what she is doing and why.** Mom and teenage daughter were running errands. At the drive-in banking line, Mom got back \$100 too much from her transaction. When she said to the cashier, “There’s a mistake”, the cashier forcefully denied any problem. Finally the supervisor came and Mom sent the whole transaction back. Shortly the cashier couldn’t say enough nice things to Mom for sending the \$100 back. While driving away, Mom said, “It would have been dishonest to keep the money. God’s Word is very clear about honesty.” Honesty lesson for the day explained.

What a family does with their time gives powerful values messages to their children.

What does your family usually do with free time? Do you watch football, play video games, exercise, or help your elderly neighbor rake leaves?

Today most kids are learning their values from other kids because their parents don’t have time to teach them. Maybe it’s time to take control of your life. As a family, decide on limits for extracurricular activities. For most kids, two extracurricular activities are enough. For parents with demanding jobs or who are home schooling, one is probably enough.

“Quality time” with our kids generally only emerges from large quantities of time. For kids, time with Mom or Dad equals love. Little time, little love. Much time, much love. Time is a gift only you can give to your children. If you travel for a living, keep in touch on Skype or by phone. You have only one chance to teach your kids God’s values. Make time for it.

Begin today to live God’s values. God will be with you every moment.

REFLECT

Each tree is recognized by its own fruit.... The good man brings good things out of the good stored in his heart....For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks. Luke 6:44,45 NIV

When we live what we teach, we are able to teach others to live.

Andrew Murray

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

- **Childhood Memories.** Tell your children a story from your childhood that shows the values your parents lived. Ask your children for a childhood memory story.
- **Values at the Workplace.** Share an experience with your older kids and teens about a values decision you are dealing with at your job. Help them think it through with you. Discuss the consequences of the decision.

LEARN MORE

- *10 Christian Values Every Kid Should Know: A How-to Guide for Families* by Donna Habenicht
- *Right from Wrong: Instilling a Sense of Integrity in Your Child* by Michael Riera and Joseph Di Prisco