

Parenting God's Way

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PARENTING

Parenting is the raising of children and all the responsibilities and activities that are involved in it.

(Cambridge Dictionary)

Parenting Goals

The American Psychological Association lists the following as the major goals of parenting:

1. Ensuring children's health and safety.
2. Preparing children for life as productive adults.
3. Transmitting cultural values.

As Christians we do have these goals for our children but we view these goals through the eyes of God.

What Does God Expects of Parents?

1. Teach your children His Word
2. Exercise patience
3. Help them to become responsible adults
4. Encourage your children
5. Demonstrate His love
6. Model Jesus (good role model)
7. Make time for your children
8. Nurture your children
9. Know your own needs and limitations

1. Teach your children His Word

These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. ⁷ Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ⁸ Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. ⁹ Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

(Deuteronomy 6: 6-9, NIV)

- It is the duty of parents to facilitate the spiritual development of their children
- Teach children to read the Bible (Get Bibles appropriate to the age group). Make it fun.
- Have regular family devotions where you read the Bible, discuss what you read and answer questions.
- Teach them to pray
- Take them to Sunday School and Church each Sunday
- Get them involved in Youth Fellowship and other youth programmes

2. Exercise patience

And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

(Ephesians 6:4, KJV)

- Be calm and in control of all situations
- Children will test you to see your breaking point

3. Help them to become responsible adults

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

(Proverbs 22: 6, KJV)

- Discipline your children

Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but whoever hates correction is stupid.

(Proverbs 12:1, NIV)

- * Children need to be guided to behave in an acceptable manner and to exercise self-control. They should display the behaviour whether or not we are present. If left to learn on their own they will never learn to behave appropriately.

A rod and a reprimand impart wisdom, but a child left undisciplined disgraces its mother. (Proverbs 29:15, NIV)

- * Make your expectations clear
- * Explain why the values you are trying to impart are important
- * Set limits and consequences with your children. The consequence must fit the misbehaviour.
- * Be consistent in enforcing these consequences.
- * Examples of disciplinary techniques:
 - * Time-out: Placing child in a boring place after unacceptable behaviour. It is time-out from attention.
 - * Loss of privileges: Take away something or an activity they enjoy.
 - * Offer choices: Allow child to choose between two activities or things.
 - * Create a yes environment: Create an environment where you use no minimally or not at all. For younger children childproof the house. Older children yes you choose your own clothes but we have to see them before you pay for them.
 - * Chose your battles—ignore some behaviours when

they are not in danger, remember everybody make mistakes

- * Look for possible triggers of the behaviour and minimize them.
- * Divert their attention: Distract younger children with something you know they are interested in.
- * Spanking: Hitting a child on the buttocks with the hand or an object. The aim is to inflict swift pain to stop behaviour and not to injure the child.
- Teach them good manners
 - * Kindness
 - * Respect
 - * Consideration
- Teach them rules of etiquette
 - * Rules of interacting with each other
- Ensure they acquire skills needed to survive on their own
- Give them responsibilities based on their level of maturity
 - * Do not do for them what they can do for themselves. Let them learn from their mistakes
 - * Do not expect perfection from them
- Help them to acquire the ability to earn a living

4. Encourage your children

- Encourage your children to be the unique persons God made each to be. Nurture the gifts or skills God gave each child.
 - * Don't project your gifts unto them (Don't expect them to be a younger version of you)
- Encourage their questions and help them to make sense of the world.
- Encourage them to dream big
- Support their ideas and activities
- Ensure they are enrolled in and are attending school
- Help them with their homework
- Attend PTA meetings, talk with their teachers
- Challenge them to stretch themselves
- Encourage confidence and high self-esteem
- Encourage them to express their emotions

5. Demonstrate God's love

- Demonstrate God's love in the kind compassionate ways you attend to your children, partner, kin, friends and acquaintances.
- Hug them, tell them you love them, be gentle
- Forgive willingly
- Practice unconditional love
- Avoid blaming, shaming, criticizing and fault finding
- Do not compare them to others

6. Model Jesus (good role model)

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

(Galatians 5: 22-23b, NIV)

- Model to your children the way you expect them to behave. Do as I say but not what I do will not work. It will lead to rebellious children.
- The best role model is Jesus—Do what Jesus would do
- Model Jesus in and out of season:
 - * Respect
 - * Friendliness
 - * Honesty
 - * Kindness
 - * Tolerance
 - * Unselfishness
 - * Express thanks
 - * Humility

7. Make time for your children

- Always find time to communicate with your child (verbally and non-verbally)
- Talk with them
 - * While you are doing a chore together
 - * While playing together
 - * During mealtime
 - * Be willing to stop whatever you are doing to give them attention when needed
- Workout problems together
- Let them know you are available to them
- Take them shopping
- Take them to work with you if it is safe and your employers will allow it
- Let them feel that they are an integral part of your life and not a burden

8. Nurture your children

- Provide an environment in which they can thrive
- See to their physical wellbeing
- Provide healthy foods
 - * Whole, real, fresh, organic, unprocessed food
 - * Lots of colourful fruits and vegetables
 - * Foods with plenty fibres
 - * Foods containing omega-3 fats
 - * Filtered water daily
 - * Unsweetened fruit or vegetable juice
- Give them smaller more frequent meals to keep their blood sugar even and prevent swings in energy, mood and appetite
- Avoid:
 - * Simple sugars (glucose, granulated sugar, clear sugar)
 - * Refined carbohydrates (white rice, flour)
 - * High fructose corn syrup
 - * Artificial sweeteners
 - * Trans or hydrogenated fats (margarine, shortening)
 - * Most animal fats (suet, lard)
 - * Foods with more than five ingredients on the label
 - * Colouring
 - * Preservatives

- * High calorie drinks:
 - ◇ Sodas
 - ◇ Sweetened fruit drinks
 - ◇ Sports drinks
 - ◇ Diet drinks
- Encourage Physical Exercise
 - * Physical Education at school
 - * Exercise as a family
 - ◇ Physical games—football, netball
 - ◇ Walking
 - ◇ Cycling
 - ◇ Jogging
 - ◇ Swimming
- Encourage mental exercise
 - * Board games
 - * Puzzles
 - * Quizzes
- Eating well, physical activity and mental games keep the brain healthy. The brain controls the child’s physical, mental and emotional performance.
- Keeping children safe
 - * Provide adequate and secure housing
 - * Keep them free from harm or abuse
 - * Keep harmful substances and implements out of reach of children

- * Ensure they are supervised by one or more responsible, trustworthy adult at all times
- Provide modest, durable, clean clothing
 - * Keep them warm in the cold and cool in the hot months
 - * Cover their bodies to protect them against child predators, germs and pests

9. Know your own needs and limitations

- The perfect parent does not exist
- Do not be too hard on yourself (cut yourself some slack)
- Know your strengths and weaknesses
 - * Rely on your partner or other family members to help out in your weak areas.
 - * Don't allow your children to exploit your weaknesses
- * Remember your child does not expect perfection. They will consider you to be the best parent in the world if you keep them safe and make them feel special.

Benefits of Parenting God's Way

- ◆ Children who fear God
- ◆ Happy children
- ◆ Physically, mentally and emotionally healthy children.
- ◆ Well adjusted children; resulting in well adjusted adults.
 - Responsible
 - Trustworthy
 - Make wise decisions
 - Not easily led astray
- ◆ Parents minds are at ease
- ◆ The family members enjoy a healthy relationship with each other

About Veronica Sutherland



Veronica V. Sutherland is an author, teacher, speaker, minister, coach, mother, and wife who is passionate about serving God through service to others. She has heeded the call, from God, to utilize her gifts and experience to minister to families by helping mothers to build strong purposeful families enjoying good health, strong faith in God, rich relationships, and good communication. This she does through writing books, online courses, speaking, coaching, and blogging. She gets to pursue her passions of teaching, writing, Family Education and serving Jesus Christ all at the same time.

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