

Raising Kids in Current Stressful Times

Most parents would agree we live in a time when raising children is harder than ever. It is difficult because in most families both parents are employed outside of the home, which means parents must do their most important job at the end of a full workday, when they are tired. It is also difficult because most families do not have the support of an extended family living nearby to help. The prevalence of gang violence and the fact that even elementary aged children are being exposed to drugs and alcohol has also added to this challenge. And, as hundreds of parenting books, espousing contradictory views, flood the market each year, parenting decisions have also become more difficult. All of these modern-day challenges have made parenting a confusing and daunting job. To demystify this job, while accomplishing it well, parents won't go wrong if they stick to the basics. The basics will help them succeed in their most important mission, raising a healthy child.

Although times are tough, and parenting norms are constantly changing, holding on to your core values and remembering the parenting basics will provide a firm foundation. The parenting basics that will help you create a firm foundation for your family include treating your child with love and respect, remembering that you are the boss, and spending time together as a family.

Over the years research has consistently shown that loving, but firm parents raise the healthiest children. Children need to know that they are loved and that the parent is the boss. Showing your love does not mean that you need to say, "yes" to all of their requests. Instead it means that you need to show your child affection and spend time with your child. Spending time together doesn't need to be a big production it can be as simple as eating dinner together most nights, or talking on the phone for a few minutes at the end of the day, if you and your child don't live together. It is best if the time you spend together is predictable so your child knows you will be there for him or her following a really bad day.

Children will push the limits whenever they can, and they need to know that their parents will push back. Children feel most secure, and grow-up to be confident adults who can set limits for themselves when they have had parents who were able to do this. So, say "no" when you believe "no" is the best answer. Say "no" when your child's request does not mesh with the values you want your family to reflect. Say "no" when your child asks to do something unsafe or illegal. You are the boss. You set the moral compass for you're your family. You decide what is best for your family. Each time you say "yes" or "no" to one of your child's requests you are letting your child know what you believe is "right" and "wrong."

Although showing your child love, spending time with your child, and setting limits may sound easy; this simple prescription can be more difficult than it looks. For some extra assistance in improving your parenting skills contact Holman at 1-800-321-2843. CCPOA has contracted with The Holman Group to provide confidential counseling services as part of your CCPOA Supervisory Members (SO6 & MO6). It is available 24/7 to help you and your family members manage the day-to-day issues we all face. This is a 10 visit benefit per problem per year.

800-321-2843 24/7