Good Parenting Skills:

3 Keys to Successful Parenting

The "Three Keys to Success" that will unlock the door to well-behaved and well-adjusted children.

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Introduction

I’m so glad you decided to download this e-book! Why?

Because parenting is the hardest job on Earth. This e-book will make it easier for you.

Why is it that you get an owner’s manual for the new dishwasher you buy or special training for that new job you’re about to start, but you get sent home from the hospital with a new baby with no information or training at all.

“Good Parenting Skills: 3 Keys to Successful Parenting” IS the owner’s manual they should have sent home with you. You will be introduced to three essential keys that will provide you with information that you absolutely need as a parent to raise a well-behaved, well-balanced and confident child from birth all the way through those tough teen-age years.

It doesn’t matter whether you have a new baby and you’re planning now how to communicate and discipline your child, or if you have a two year old that’s challenging your authority and you need to figure out what to do about it. It could even be your sixteen year old that you’re struggling to communicate with. You will learn important parenting skills from these three keys.

I’m a parent of two children and have been a daycare provider for sixteen years. I know from experience what it takes to raise a child who will listen to you, respect you and grow up to be a good kid, a good student and a good citizen within your community.

As a daycare provider, I have new children come into my daycare all the time. I see children who have no structure in their daily routine. I hear children talk to their parents with no respect. I watch children have daily temper tantrums. And after about four weeks in my daycare, I hear comments from the parents who have been in my daycare for awhile say, “Yup, I can see your positive influence rubbing off on this child too.”

So, let’s get started together on learning the keys that unlock the door to successful parenting!
The Gold Key Parenting Tips

Absolute Must-Do Parenting Tips

The Gold Key Parenting Tips are techniques that every successful parent must possess. Use of these techniques will lead to a happy and well-behaved child.

**Gold Parenting Tip #1**

“Treat your child with love and respect and expect the same back from them.”

Successful parenting means you should enjoy being with your child. Time spent with your child should rarely be stressful and full of arguments. Teaching a child to communicate with respect for both you in the parenting role and others they come in contact with on a day to day basis makes time spent with the child more enjoyable for everyone.

You will no doubt have some tough times. There will be times when they challenge your authority and there will be times when they don't agree with your decision making. But the majority of the time should be quality time.

The process starts with you in the parenting role. You need to be a good role model for your child. If you treat them with love and respect, then they’ll be willing to give it back to you. If you're always yelling at your children and criticizing their behavior, you will get yelling and criticizing back.

Negative energy feeds off of negative energy. As soon as things get tense and start to heat up, it’s hard to put the fire out because human nature is to get defensive, even in children. You need to be willing to talk to your child and explain unwanted behavior. Since you are the adult, you’re the one who has to remain calm and keep things at an even keel.
Believe me, I know that is easier said than done. I was raised by a mother who was a yeller, so I naturally became a yeller when I took on the role of being a mother. It’s taken a lot of years of practice to get rid of that tool in my parenting box of techniques. Every once in awhile, this poor technique sneaks its way back into my box and I have to work again on getting rid of it. When things get heated and the yelling starts, it’s hard to step out of the situation and take a breath, but as the adult, that’s exactly what you have to do. Don’t start shouting or calling names and don’t allow the child to do that to you. If your child does start shouting, you need to calmly let him know that kind of behavior will not be accepted.

To teach your child respectful behavior, they need to know that they are a person who is valued. They need to know they are an important part of your family whose opinions and thoughts count. They need to feel the respect coming from you.

That doesn’t mean your child is allowed to say what they want, when they want. It means there are times when you sit down as a family and carry on a conversation. Each person should have a right to their opinion without being criticized or laughed at by anyone else in the family. Each person should have times when they get to make the decisions for the family’s leisure time. And each person should have time to share points of their day without interruption.

It’s important that children learn at a young age how to interact with others with respect and that interaction starts with their parents and siblings. Teach your children that if they want to communicate with you, it needs to be calmly and respectfully. Do not give into their demands if they yelled or screamed at you. They also need to treat their siblings in the same manner. Siblings should be treated with more respect than the child's friends. If a child is disrespecting a sibling, then you need to step in and explain what is expected.

As you teach your child this mutual respect within your home, it is also important to teach them respect for others that they will be coming in contact with when they’re outside your home.

Gold Parenting Tip #2

“Be a good listener.”
Heed this parenting tip! Your child needs and deserves time when they are allowed to express feelings, share an experience or even explain a bad decision from beginning to end without interruption from you.

My favorite time to do this was when my kids were preschoolers. It seems all preschoolers do this because I still enjoy doing it with my daycare kids. After they’ve spent some quality time drawing a picture, sit down and ask them to tell you about their picture. Do not guess what they drew, because if you are wrong, you will hurt their feelings. Simply ask them to tell you about the picture. I love how the kid’s voice will change to a different level and they tell the story about the picture.

As your children enters school, give them time when they get home after school or time when you get home from work for them to tell you about their day. Don't interject with comments about what they should have done or telling them what they did was wrong. Just listen, from beginning to end.

When you listen to them as a preschooler and still listen to them when they are school-age, they will be used to you listening to them when they become a teenager. Don't give your teenage negative feedback every time they talk to you or they will quit talking.

When you have a teenager willing to talk to you, be sure you can listen. It’s the perfect time to find out what’s happening with their friends, if drugs or alcohol have been a part of any decisions made, if there is an interest in the opposite sex, etc.

Open a line of communication with your child as soon as they're old enough to communicate back. It takes work, but keep the communication line open all the time so that you still have it in the most crucial teen-age years.

**Gold Parenting Tip #3**

“Your child should know the boundaries and know who’s making the rules.”

Parenting children means letting them know what the boundaries are and who is enforcing the rules. This all has to start at a very young age.
I’ve witnessed families who have a new infant and the infant changes the entire family routine. Of course an infant will make family dynamics change to a certain degree, but it should not change the entire family routine. The infant should fit into your schedule and routine, not vice-versa.

An infant running the household transitions into a toddler running the household. If your toddler yells and screams when they’re not getting their way and you immediately jump to see what they want, they will keep yelling and screaming to get their way. I’ve had plenty of families in my daycare whose toddler was controlling the parents.

The tail was wagging the dog.

These parents arrive at my house in the morning complaining that they were unable to take a shower because the toddler threw a fit or they’re running late because the toddler had to color a picture before coming to daycare. Getting yourself and your children ready to go in the morning so you can get to work on time is a perfect time to be a parent and enforce the rules. If your toddler can’t let you get ready for work, then they must sit in a chair while you’re getting ready. If they cry and scream because you’re being mean, put in earplugs. They need to know that you are making the rules and you will control the morning schedule.

A toddler running the household transitions into a preschooler running the household. By this age, when rules are not enforced, they’ve learned that throwing a tantrum will allow them to get their way. Sometimes it doesn’t work right away, but they figure out that if they throw the tantrum long enough, you will give in. Don’t give into your child’s screaming just because you’re getting a headache. Giving in will cause way too many headaches in the future and you will find out what a real headache is!

You have to be willing to tell a child “no.” It really is okay to say no if the reason you’re saying it is in the child’s best interest. You may be keeping them safe or you may be teaching them a life lesson. It’s also okay for a child to get mad at you.

Your child won't quit loving you just because you had to say no.

When you’re raising a toddler and preschooler, it’s so easy to feel like you're always saying “no.” "No, don’t touch the t.v." "No, don’t hit your brother." “No, you can’t have any more treats.” Make sure you get some more positive statements in between the negative. “Be careful not to spill that glass of milk” sounds better than “Don’t spill that glass of milk.” I know you can carry that without dropping
“Tell, don’t ask.”

While parenting, you should know that when you ask a question, you’re giving the other person the option of answering “yes” or “no”. So when you’re talking to your child, if they don’t have the option of saying “no”, don’t ask it as a question.

For instance, with your toddler if you say “Did you want to try to use the bathroom before we leave for the grocery store?” You don’t want them to say “no” because you don’t want them wetting their pants, so don’t give them that option. Instead say “Let’s go in and try to go potty before we get into the car.”

Your twelve year old is leaving for school without a jacket when it’s cold out. Don’t ask them to put one on. Tell them they need to put their jacket on.

With your fifteen year old, you might say, “Would you load the dishes after dinner?” You don’t want the answer to be “no” because it’s a household chore you expect them to help with, so don’t give them that option. Instead say, “Please load up the dishwasher after dinner.”

You are the adult and the parent. It is okay for you to tell your child what you want them to do or what you expect from them. And actually, as a parent, it’s your job to tell them these things. It’s your job to tell your kids the rules at home. And it’s your job to tell your kids the rules when out in public.

**It’s your job to the the hard stuff!**

I was guilty of asking my kids to do something way too many times. After they answered no to my question, I had to say “Okay, let me rephrase that…” I had to remember to tell, not ask.

**Gold Parenting Tip #5**
“Follow through with punishments. Don’t give empty threats.”

Crucial parenting tip! Always, always, always be willing to follow through with a punishment you dish out. If you took your son’s video games away for a day, make sure he doesn’t get it for the entire day. If you told your sixteen year old daughter she’s not allowed to talk on the phone for a week, make sure it’s a week. The hardest part of following through with a punishment is when it interferes with a day trip, a family vacation or your son wants to spend the night at a friend’s house. You cannot give in! Giving in sends the message that if they want it bad enough, they can pester you until you give in.

Parenting means avoiding empty threats. Empty threats are when you tell your child you’re going to do something that really isn’t possible for you to do. Like when you’re playing at the park with your three year old and he doesn’t want to leave. You say, “You need to come now or I’ll leave without you.” You know you would never leave without him so that’s an empty threat. You might say to your fifteen year old daughter, “You need to change your attitude or I’m going to ship you off to military school.” If you’re not really willing to send her off to military school, don’t make the threat. The kids will learn real fast that you don’t mean what you say.

As a daycare provider to twelve kids, the kids need to know that I mean what I say. I will not spank or use any form of physical punishment, but I do train the kids that when I tell them to do something, they are expected to do it. If they don’t, THEY WILL (not might) lose privileges. If they know for certain what the end result will be, it will not be worth the bad behavior to begin with. Of course, I have children testing this policy every single day and every single day the end result will be the same. Written down on paper, I know this sounds like I’m a tyrant, but it really isn’t that way. I have a very friendly relationship with all my daycare kids. They love coming to my house because they know what to expect and they know exactly where the boundaries are when they’re at my house. Even the kids I have to be toughest on tell me they want to live with me.

Gold Parenting Tip #6

“Be a parent, not a best friend.”
This parenting tip means that sometimes you have to be the bad guy. Your child will get angry with you when you tell them no. It’s okay. They won’t hate you forever.

One of my husband’s favorite sayings is “It’s easy to be a good friend. It’s hard to be a good parent.” I totally agree with that quote. Nobody wants their child to be mad at them for disciplining them or making a decision for them, but that’s exactly what you need to do.

The thing to remember is that kids are very forgiving. Even if they get mad at you, they will forgive you in about ten minutes. It’s like in a marriage. It’s almost impossible to be married to someone without having occasional disagreements. It’s impossible to raise a child without occasional conflict.

As the adult, it’s YOUR job to teach, discipline and guide your child down the right path. It’s a form of neglect to never tell them “no” and let them make all their own decisions. Their brain is still under construction and they can’t possibly know all the right decisions to make. A child who is raised with never being told “no” will get a real wakeup call when they get out into the real world. They will be told no at their job and they won’t know how to handle it. When they handle it poorly, they will simply get told no again or not have that job anymore.

**Gold Key Parenting Tip #7**

“If it’s a struggle every time you attempt an activity, then change your approach.”

Parenting can mean daily struggles. Over the years I’ve done daycare, I’ve seen many children come into my house every morning with eyes that look like they’ve done quite a bit of crying already. Mom or Dad are totally frustrated and just can’t wait to get that kid dropped off at daycare and take off to work to get things calmed down.

I had those same types of situations with my own kids when they were little. It was my husband, Mike, who taught me that if the situation is stressful every single time you go into it, then change the way you go into it.

For example, if your child throws a tantrum every single morning trying to get ready to leave the house, you need to change the routine. It might mean getting him
up five to ten minutes earlier to give him just a little more time to wake up before you try to get him dressed.

If your daughter can’t make a decision on what outfit to wear for the day, but also doesn’t want any ideas from you, pick her outfit out the night before and have it lying on the end of the bed.

Whatever the situation is, adjust how it is approached by you and your child until it runs smoothly every single time. Children like and NEED consistency. So remember to keep it consistent!

Gold Key Parenting Tip #8

“Make sure your child gets uninterrupted time from you.”

Parenting tips have to change with the times. In today’s world of cell phones, video games and busy schedules, it is so easy to forget to spend quality time together.

"If Johnny is happy playing his video game for the next hour, I can get a lot done around the house." Johnny getting quality, uninterrupted time from you today is just as important as it was for you when you were growing up.

There are lots of things you can do to spend quality time with your child.

- Make a lunch date for just the two of you.
- Go for a walk.
- Go out for ice cream.
- When you’re driving them to their school activity, put the cell phone away.
- If you’re dealing with that teenage boy that just shuts down when he’s not on his video game, then play video games with him and chat while you’re playing.
- The majority of girls love to shop. So take your daughter on a shopping trip, just the two of you. It can result in some good, quality, talking time.
- Play a board game.

Quality time doesn't have to mean you're doing something that costs money. It simply means dedicating a portion of your day to be with your child when no one else is allowed in.
This time you're giving your child is making them feel special. It's building their confidence. It's allowing them to learn by observation. And it's keeping that ever-important line of communication open.

**Gold Parenting Tip #9**

“Pick your battles….but make sure you always win.”

Parenting children means you're going to have battles. It will start young when your two year old needs to challenge authority. And then every once in awhile throughout their childhood, it seems necessary for them to test you again just to make sure nothing has changed.

These types of battles may seem small because they deal with small issues. They are, however, the start of a war if you don't win the first one.

It might be an issue like your toddler not wanting to put their coat on when it's chilly outside. You tell them to put it on, but they whine and cry because they don't want to. It'd be easy to decide it's such a small issue and not worth a battle and not make them put their coat on. You need to look at the big picture. This is just the beginning stage of your toddler testing your authority. If you give in to the coat issue, they will move on to the next level to see what other control they can take from you. Make sure you win this first battle to clearly give your child the message that you are still in charge.

Later, you will have battles when your older child doesn't agree with you or the decision you've made. It's okay to have these battles. They're just a normal part of growing up. With these battles, you need to pick and choose which ones are the important ones. If the issue is minor and the outcome just doesn't matter, then it's okay to let your child win the battle. For instance, if your daughter picked out the outfit she wants to wear to daycare this morning and it doesn’t match, it just doesn’t matter. Let her have her way.

On the other hand, when your twelve year old son is climbing on the rocks near the river, you tell him to get down and he starts the battle. This is a life and death situation and you need to put energy into a battle! It’s a battle you need to win so that he is no longer in danger.
The battles get bigger and bigger as your children get older. The issues become more serious and now the child is old enough to have an opinion of their own. Take some time to think about issues you know you'll be faced with when they become teenagers, such as curfew, dating, driving your car, etc. Decide on where you want to stand on these issues and be prepared for the battle before it even begins.

The Silver Key Parenting Tips

Strongly Suggested Parenting Tips

The Silver Key Parenting Tips are items that will help in raising a strong, confident, well-balanced child, but are not absolutely necessary in having a well-behaved child.

Silver Parenting Tip #1

“In the “heat of the moment”, give yourself a time-out.”

No matter what age child you're dealing with, there are going to be times when you get so angry you could just scream! You may yell at the child to try and get your point across. Or maybe the child involved starts screaming or yelling.

Screaming and yelling doesn’t accomplish anything because as soon as one of you starts raising their voice, the other person involved quits listening.

If your anger is building up and you feel yourself getting ready to yell, take a deep breath and walk away for a moment. That doesn’t mean to just forget about the issue that made you angry, because it should be addressed. But address it at a time when everyone is calm and able to talk about it.

When you are able to communicate calmly with your child, use a normal tone of voice to express your feelings. Let them know that what they did was wrong,
explain the boundaries they crossed and inform them of any consequences for their behavior. And then, by all means, follow through with the consequences. Don't give in to whining or begging and don't shorten the original time-frame you assigned to the consequence. Your child has to know you are just as serious when you're calmly talking to them as you were when you yelled at them.

Something else that happens when you scream and yell at your child: they learn to scream and yell when they are angry. It will not only come back at you during confrontation between you and your child, but that will be the technique they know when they become angry with their friends at school. You need to teach your child a better technique for expressing their anger.

Silver Parenting Tip #2

"Talk to your child like a real person. Even babies don’t NEED baby talk.”

Parenting is a serious subject. Although it's fun to play with your infant and baby talk with them, it is not a necessity in their upbringing.

Remember that your baby is learning from you right from the start. One of the first things they learn is speech and you want them to learn to speak correctly. After that first year of life, no more baby talk!

All your words should not end is “y”. For example, do not ask your four year old “Joshy, do you want to give Mommy a huggy?”

As a child reaches toddler age, it’s important to speak to them in a more mature matter. That doesn't mean to speak to them as if they are an adult, but they're not a baby anymore. If you speak to them like they’re a baby, they will act like a baby. If you speak to them like a toddler who is growing and learning and capable of making some decisions on their own, they will learn to do that.

Good communication skills are a key element for so many areas of your life. For your child, you want them to have good communication with you, their parent. When your child enters school, you want them to have good communication with their friends. As your child enters the work force, you want them to have good communication with their co-workers and the boss. In your child’s personal relationship, you want them to have good communication with their significant
other. You want to teach your child the basics of all those communication skills starting when they are an infant.

My overall philosophy of communicating with children is to speak to them at the age-appropriate level. I treat children like people, not babies. Kids get excited when you take the time to speak with them person to person. They like that you give them the respect. And they really enjoy when you give them time to communicate with you in that same manner.

**Silver Parenting Tip #3**

“Allow your child times when they can show independence.”

When you're parenting a child, there are many times you have to tell a child how things are going to be that you need to find times to let them make their own decision. Young children struggle to show their independence and if you don't find a time to let them demonstrate it, they will keep fighting to find it. You need to find a time to let them make a decision. A decision that no matter what they decide, no one gets hurt.

My favorite way to let my kid’s show their independence was with their haircuts. As soon as they were old enough to care, I let them decide how they wanted their hair cut. A haircut doesn’t hurt anyone and can be changed at any time.

When my son was little, he tried to see how far he could push this issue. He kept getting his hair cut shorter and shorter because he knew I preferred it longer. Then for one appointment, he asked if he could get his head shaved. I said sure. Boy, was he shocked. He got it shaved, but it wasn’t too long before he started growing it back again. It didn't hurt anyone, but he got to show his independence.

Another easy way to let a child show independence is to let them pick their own clothes for the day. If they’re headed to daycare or school, it’s okay if their clothes don’t match exactly. Let them show their independence on a normal day-to-day basis. Then, if you’re on your way to get a portrait taken and you want them to be dressed in a certain manner, you can be the parent and tell them what you want them to wear.

A good way to give an older child some independence is to let them plan your family’s free time on a Saturday. It will teach them responsibility along with letting them know that you value their opinion and trust them to make a good
decision. It has to be within reason, of course, but they will love the fact you gave them the independence.

Silver Parenting Tip #4

“Get excited when your child walks into a room.”

You know that feeling you get when you run into a friend you haven’t seen for awhile and they get that big smile on their face and rush over to see you? How does that make you feel? Pretty special, right? That’s how your kids should feel when you haven’t seen them for awhile….or a few minutes.

This doesn’t work so well for toddlers and preschoolers because they’re so young you need to keep an eye on them all the time. This is more for school-aged children.

- When you see them first thing in the morning as they get out of bed and come to the kitchen...smile, acknowledge their presence and ask how they slept.
- When they come home from school...if you're lucky enough to be able to greet them at the door, smile at them and let them know you missed them all day.
- If they’re in the family room watching t.v. and then they come to the kitchen while you’re fixing dinner, smile and acknowledge they entered the room. Let them know that they are worth a break in your work to acknowledge their presence.
- If they stayed overnight at a friend's house...hug them when they get home, ask how it went and what they did. It shows you care about them and makes them feel special.

It's all about making them feel like an individual. If you have more than one child, you have to let them know that you love them for who they are as an individual. Time alone with them is the ideal situation, but when you can't do that, those smiles and winks when they walk into a room let them know you're aware of them.
This is also the perfect time to say “I love you”. Don’t assume your child knows how much you love them. Tell them out loud. Let it be the last thing they hear when you tuck them into bed at night. And when they get older, let it be the last thing they hear when they walk out the door. A child can not hear “I love you” too much!

Silver Parenting Tip #5

“Teach manners, please.”

If you're going to pick and choose from this list of parenting tips, be sure to pick this tip.

Teach manners to your children.

Teaching manners is a lost art. Parents just don’t do it anymore and that’s not right. Have you said or done something nice for a child outside your own family and they don't even know enough to say thank you? These are the children who grow up to be store clerks or the waitress in the restaurant who don't know enough to say thank you when they take your money paying for their services.

I start teaching my daycare kids their manners at the age of two. I often have the parents ask me how I get them to say please and thank you. It’s simple. I hand them their sippy cup or a cracker and when they go to take it from me, I don’t let go until they say please and then thank you.

I have ten to twelve kids at the lunch table every day. It takes a lot of time and a lot of effort, but I work very hard at teaching them manners.

Many times, my daycare children have a choice between two fruits or two vegetables. When I tell them their choices, I teach them to give me their answer followed by a please. When I place the plate in front of them, they are to say thank you. When they remember to use their manners on their own, I show my gratitude for the nice manners and they're always very proud.

Sometimes, I change the game a little. If a child asks me for a cracker, I say "What?" They'll say, "Can I have a cracker?" I say "What?" After about four times, they understand and the next question is "Can I have a cracker, please?" Then we giggle together.
The thing about teaching manners that I learned from my own kids is that you can work and work and work with them until you're red in the face and they still won’t remember to use manners around home. But trust me, when they’re in public, they'll remember.

Silver Parenting Tip #6

“Let your child know the schedule for the day, but not the week.”

When children are very young, they have no concept of time. So when you tell them they’re going to an amusement park next Saturday, they don’t understand that means they have to wait. They expect it to happen tomorrow. It’s extremely hard for small children to wait too long. You'll not only make it hard on them to wait, but you'll also get pestered a lot about how much longer.

The other problem with telling them your plans is that sometimes the plans get changed or canceled. What if it rains and you can’t go to Six Flags. Then you have a very disappointed child. If they never knew the plans to start with they will not get disappointed.

On the other hand, letting them know the schedule for the day is very important and beneficial to you as a parent. You want to inform your child of the plans for the day so they can prepare for them. When you prepare them for the day, things run much smoother. When you catch them by surprise, you might get a bad reaction, even if there is no reason for it.

It’s also important to let kids know when it’s time for an activity to end. If you’re playing at a park and you suddenly say “Okay, it’s time to leave”, you’re probably going to get a wild reaction. If you warn them that in two minutes it will be time to go, it gives the child a chance to prepare for the end.

I used to tell my kids they had two minutes more, but it was usually five to ten minutes. As my kids got older, it became quite a joke for them to ask “a real two minutes or Mommy’s two minutes?”

Silver Parenting Tip #7
“Your child should be doing household chores.”

My husband and I raised our kids with the “hard work” ethic. At a very young age, they were given chores around the house and they earned a weekly allowance in order to feel like they were doing their part taking care of the family. This teaches a good work ethic.

For example, when the kids were very young, we were looking into buying a camper. When they heard their mom and dad discussing whether we could afford it or not, they both went to the piggy banks and each brought us about five dollars to help pay for the camper.

That was quite a bit of money for them considering how young they were. We accepted their money, purchased the camper, and shared with everyone the fact that our kids helped us pay for it. The look of pride we saw in their faces was unmatchable.

I had a kid in my daycare that went home one day and told his mom he wanted to have a chore chart just like Shawn and Jenna have. The next day he came to daycare and proudly told me he had a chore chart and he, too, was earning an allowance. I asked him what chores he had on his chart. His chores included taking a bath, eating his breakfast, going to bed on time, etc. I told him I was proud of him, but in my eyes, those items are not chores, they are expected behavior. Chores that you earn an allowance for should be contributing to the overall maintenance of the house that the whole family is living in.

Teach your children good work ethics when they are young; it will carry through the rest of their lives. It's so much easier to teach them the right way as preschoolers and grade schoolers and teach along the way, rather than trying to instill a good work ethic when they are a teenager entering the workforce.

Silver Parenting Tip #8

“Teach your child respect for others.”

I’ve always believed that if I’m willing to criticize someone, I need to be willing to look in a mirror to see if I possess that same fault. Before I had kids of my own, I was very critical of mothers in the grocery store who could not keep their kids under control throughout the whole store.
After I had my kids, I learned that going through the grocery store is one of the most challenging things to do with small children. I feel bad for the negative thoughts that ran through my head when I saw those mothers struggling, but this would be an example of teaching your child respect for others at a very young age. You don't scream in the grocery store because you're bothering a lot of people you don't even know. A small child will not understand the exact message, but you still need to teach them that screaming at the grocery store in unacceptable behavior.

I can say, though, that to this day I feel bad for those mothers who are struggling in the grocery store. I still get irritated with the parents who show no signs of attempting to keep their children under control in public. If your one year old is letting out screams just to hear her voice echo in the store, at least attempt to stop her. I know a one year old may not understand what you’re saying and that a screaming echo is very fun, but you need to at least attempt to teach her what’s right and what’s wrong in public.

The following story may not totally relate to the topic at hand, but I just thought of it as I was talking about taking your kid through a store and it makes me laugh every time I think of it. I had a daycare mom who was a single mom. Her boyfriend had just bought a house and she was helping with the interior decorating. They went to the home improvement store and were standing near bathroom fixtures trying to decide what would look best in his bathroom. As she turned around to check on her four year old, he was using the toilet that was out for display.

Back to the topic of respect for others, I think that teaching kids respect for their elders is another lost art. When my parents used to use that term, I thought they were talking about respecting the grandparents of the world. As I became an adult and experienced such a lack of respect from preschoolers and grade schoolers, I learned that term meant respect any adult.

I recently heard a story from a lady who is a grandmother volunteering at a local grade school. She was helping out in the kindergarten class and accidentally called a little boy by the wrong name. When she realized it, she apologized and explained that she was trying really hard to learn everyone's name. He told her she wasn't doing a very good job. As the story was relayed, it was funny and we laughed. But what really matters is that the little boy did not know enough to show respect and patience for this lady who was nice enough to volunteer in his classroom. It should be mandatory to teach your child how to speak to adults. I feel the children of
today speak to adults like they are speaking to one of their friends and that is just not right.

In addition to learning respect for their elders, children need to be taught respect for other people’s property. If you don’t own it, you have no right to mistreat or damage it. If you borrow something from someone, make sure to treat it better than if it was your own. When you return it, it should be in better condition than when you borrowed it, if possible.

Silver Parenting Tip #9

“Have a good bedtime routine.”

Having a good bedtime routine means both at naptime and at night time. During a normal daycare day, I put eight kids down for a nap in four bedrooms. It is not a struggle. The kids actually cheer when I say it’s naptime. That’s because I make getting ready for nap a fun time.

I start by putting the kids down in shifts beginning with the youngest. Each child gets individual time from me which includes chatting and then tickle time. I start music for them and they go to sleep. None of them cry when I lay them down and it’s rare that I go to check on them that they’re not already sleeping. If I do check on them and they’re playing, I can tell them to lie back down and go to sleep. They do this because of my consistency and follow through on what happens when they don’t listen. They lose privileges. Even young children who are napping age can understand this concept.

And then comes evening bedtime. This process is probably much more of a challenge, but still very possible to do calmly. I think getting a child ready for bed in the evening should be about a fifteen minute process. You read a story, brush your teeth, get a drink of water and go to bed. After that, there should be no reason to get out of bed. If they come up with a reason, it was an unnecessary one and they should be sent back to bed without whatever the request was. Once you start giving in to requests they make when they get out of bed, they will try again and again to find a request that will work for them.

I’ve always wondered how small children come up with the excuses to get out of bed. When it starts, they’re not even old enough to see it on t.v. to learn the excuses. And they don’t have friends sharing ideas with them. But they all come
up with the same excuses for getting out of bed. I guess it’s a natural instinct for
kids to try and make their parents do things for them when they should be going to
bed. The moral of the story is, don’t start giving into their requests.

Okay, so you’re kids are sleeping and a couple hours later you turn in for the night.
Have you ever been sound asleep in the middle of a dream and feel a very soft tap,
tap, tap on your shoulder? My kids used to do that to me and it scared me to death!
I would get up and walk them back to their bedroom and a couple hours later there
would be another tap, tap, tap. I didn’t know how to break this habit. I told them to
quit doing it, but they still did. Until one night after they woke me up, I told them
to go back to bed. They said they wanted me to walk them back to their bedroom. I
said I was too tired and didn’t want to get out of bed. I explained that if they found
their way to my bedroom, they can find their way back. They stopped coming to
my bedroom in the night after that.

Whatever you do when you get that tap, tap, tap, DO NOT let them crawl into bed
with you. It’s very tempting to do because you’re tired and just want to go back to
sleep. If you let them crawl into bed with you once you might as well plan on
letting them crawl in every night. Laugh if you want to, but I’ve heard the stories
from my daycare families whose kids don’t even know where their own bed is
located. We, personally, never let our kids crawl into our bed.

The Bronze Key Parenting Tips

Totally Optional Parenting Tips

The Bronze Key Parenting Tips are just frosting on the cake! These are the
tips that make you different than all the other parents.

Bronze Parenting Tip #1

“Don’t be afraid to reward a child for good behavior.”

I know a lot of “child experts” say not to give material rewards to children for
good behavior. I do believe in rewarding children and here is why...as an adult,
how do you function? When you do your job and do it well, you expect a pay raise,
a bonus or a promotion. You want your boss to say “Hey, good job!” Why can’t
we teach that to our children? When you follow the rules and do a good job, there is a reward at the end.

I don’t believe in rewarding on an individual accomplishment basis, but when they do a good job throughout the day or throughout the week, be willing to reward them and tell them “Hey, good job!”

I had a daycare mom who, if I told her her son was good that day, took him to the toy store every single day after daycare. He didn’t get just a matchbox car or a tub of Playdough, he got large, rather expensive toys EVERY SINGLE DAY. That’s extreme and that will end up backfiring on her. But a trip to the toy store once a month for good behavior may be more appropriate for the task.

When you give your child a reward, be sure they know it’s a reward. For instance, it won’t necessarily be a purchased item from a store. So if you planned a special weekend trip because the kids have been so good or so responsible, make sure they know that’s why they’re going on the trip.

**Bronze Key Parenting Tip #2**

“Give compliments.”

As you’re going through the process of raising a child, be sure to compliment your child when they’ve done a good job. It not only prevents everything coming from you as a parent being negative, it gives them a feeling of accomplishment. If they feel like they were able to reach a goal, they’ll try that much harder next time to reach the goal again.

Complimenting your children builds self-confidence. When you tell your daughter how pretty she is, she grows up knowing it and believing it. When you tell your son he’s an awesome student, he goes to class with more confidence. Self confidence is the best gift you can give your child.

Give your child compliments at times they would never expect them. Not that they didn't earn them, but if you have a feeling of praise inside your head that would be nice if your child heard it, say it out loud. Those types of compliments are worth twice the power of the other ones.

**Bronze Key Parenting Tip #3**
“Catch your child doing something good.”

As parents, we all spend so much time saying "Stop it" or "Don't do that." Everything is so negative. Take some time to tell your child what you like about their behavior or their attitude. It shouldn't be while you're in a heated argument. It should be out of the blue. Just engage your child in a conversation and let them know you appreciate how peaceful the house has been or you appreciated them following through with chore requests.

Pick a random time in the day to say, "Hey, I'm glad you remembered that I asked you to clean up your bedroom." or "I'm proud of you for getting along so well with your brother. You're being an awesome big sister." You will fill your child with pride and challenge them to keep up the good behavior.

If you're dealing with a troublesome child, you may have to stretch your imagination to find something good to compliment them about. It doesn't matter how minuscule the action is, compliment them when you can. Your child may not fit into your structure, but there will still be times you can say they're doing a good job and you need to let them know that.

Bronze Key Parenting Tip #4

“Be thankful you have kids.”

Having a child is not a right. It is a privilege. It's a miracle of life that you were lucky enough to be included in.

Along with that privilege will come frustration. You are entering a territory you know little about. Your child is entering a territory they know nothing about. When you put the two of you together, the equation equals frustration.

Be patient through those frustrating moments. It's all a part of the learning tool and it will pass. Cherish the good moments.

When you're at the end of your rope, take a look at your child while they're sleeping. There is nothing as precious as a sleeping child. They're so quiet and innocent. It's the perfect time to reflect and be thankful for what you have. There are a lot of people in the world who would give anything to have what you have.

Don’t forget to tell your child you love them. You really can’t say it enough. Let it be the last thing they hear when they leave a room or leave the house. Let it be
the last thing they hear when they go to bed at night. Matter of fact, why don’t you go tell your child right now how much you love them!

**About Marcia Reagan**

Marcia Reagan has been a mother for 18 years and a daycare provider for 16 years. Over 100 children have benefited from being a part of her daycare. Because of her many years of experience, Marcia is able to raise children in a very gentle, friendly manner but gets the desired results of well-rounded and well-behaved children who people enjoy being around.

Marcia is also the creator and author of [www.DaycareAnswers.com](http://www.DaycareAnswers.com), a website built to assist parents and daycare providers in the everyday aspects of raising a child. She will help you potty train your child, feed a picky eater or teach you how to get your child to sleep without a struggle. You will also find kid-friendly recipes, craft projects and activities for indoors and out.

**Resources**

**Parenting at DaycareAnswers.com** - The main parenting page for all the tips, advice and activities Marcia has to offer: [www.DaycareAnswers.com/parenting.html](http://www.DaycareAnswers.com/parenting.html)

**Potty Training a Toddler** - Marcia has potty trained more kids than can be counted and knows how to do it stress-free. She offers basic potty training tips, knowledge of what to do when you hit a stumbling block and how to train the boys who are a little more difficult! [www.DaycareAnswers.com/potty-training-a-toddler.html](http://www.DaycareAnswers.com/potty-training-a-toddler.html)

**Feeding a Picky Eater** – Are you having battles with your child trying to get them to eat a healthy meal? Marcia provides you with strategies to get your child to eat. [http://www.DaycareAnswers.com/feeding-a-picky-eater.html](http://www.DaycareAnswers.com/feeding-a-picky-eater.html)

**Getting Your Child to Sleep** – Another common struggle that many parents have with their children. Marcia is an expert on getting children to sleep with no crying or whining. She puts an average of four children to sleep at the same time every single day in daycare and there is not one tear shed. Find out the secret at [www.daycareanswers.com/naptime-for-children.html](http://www.daycareanswers.com/naptime-for-children.html).

**Kid-Friendly Recipes** – Find breakfast, lunch, dinner, snack and dessert recipes that are loved by children of all ages. [www.daycareanswers.com/kid-friendly-recipes.html](http://www.daycareanswers.com/kid-friendly-recipes.html)

**Craft Projects** – Perfect for little hands. We have ideas for every holiday or just any day of the week: [www.daycareanswers.com/projects-for-preschoolers.html](http://www.daycareanswers.com/projects-for-preschoolers.html)
Activities for Indoors and Outdoors: Whether the sun is shining or it’s raining, we’ve got activities ideas for your kids:

Indoor Activities:  www.daycareanswers.com/indoor-activities-for-preschoolers.html
Outdoor Activities:  www.daycareanswers.com/outdoor-activities-for-preschoolers.html