

Parenting Tips Newsletter

Parent Team LLC

Connecting with your
child
October, 2009

Greetings!

This month we are going to focus on the importance of forming connections with children of all ages. Children need to feel connected. They have an innate need to belong to something bigger than themselves. As parents, we are a critical factor in filling that need. The good news for today's busy parents is that it is the quality of the connections that matters and not the quantity. However, it takes commitment over time to build a strong bond that will make a difference in the development of a child. The following articles discuss why connections are important and give some suggestions of how to connect with your child at different developmental ages. Building these connections is not only vital to your child's development but will also increase cooperation and reduce the need for discipline. Children, just like adults, are more cooperative with those that they feel connected to in a meaningful way.

Pre-school Children

During the birth to five years it is essential that children be provided with consistent, loving connections with at least one parent. This will help form the healthy, strong parent-child bond that all children need to thrive. Physical contact is one method of connecting that is particularly important at this age. Hand over hand finger plays, snuggling while reading, or gentle massages are all great ways to help them to feel connected to you.

Connecting with an infant is easy because they are so dependent on you. However toddlers begin to be more independent physically and express their own opinions emotionally. This is when connections through respect, listening and making time for playing and working together gets to be more of a challenge for parents. Pro-active parenting through connections is critical to helping tame the tantrums and elicit cooperation. Get down and play with your toddler/pre-schooler, invite them to help you with minor task that need to be done and be sure to listen to what they have to say. It is not important that you always understand what they are saying, just listen.

School Age Children

Though children six-twelve years old may seem like they are more independent they still possess that innate need to belong. Taking the time to connect with your child does not have to mean a huge time commitment. Becky Bailey, author, states that it is the quality of the interaction and not the quantity that makes the difference. The difference can mean better cooperation. Parents may view uncooperative behavior as a challenge to their authority when indeed it may just be a need for better connections.

How do you connect with school age children? Get down at their level and play with them, assign them chores that work along side you and be sure that the family meal stays in tact as much as possible. One trick to getting children to talk about their day and what is going on with them is to talk about what happened during your day. It models good communication and often times they will want to

Featured Article



Upcoming Presentations

Love and Limits: Raising happy and cooperative children

Tuesday, October 6, 2009
6:30

Bay Harbor Elementary
School PTO

Free

Adolescent Developmental Issues-Guiding teens through these challenging years

Monday, October 12, 2009
6:00 PM

St. John's The Baptist
Catholic Church in Howard

Free

Adolescent

Developmental Issues-Guiding teens through these challenging years

Monday, November 16,
2009 6:30 PM

Bay View Middle School

PTO

Free

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talk more than listen.

Teenagers

Though teenagers may deny the need for a connection with their parents, it is actually more crucial than ever that parents create connections. These connections can be a real life line through what can be tumultuous years. Staying connected with your teen can be a real challenge. Some methods that parents have found effective is writing notes to their teen and placing them where they will find them, staying involved in their schooling and other activities and providing them with opportunities to talk by just being quite around them sometimes. It is important to note that it is never to late too connect or re-connect with a child.

Parent Team is a parent coaching business that seeks to empower parents with effective parenting strategies. I work with parents and families individually or in groups. It would be my pleasure to coach you to feeling more empowered as a parent.

Sincerely,

Ruth Fett
Parent Team LLC

920-619-6539

www.parentteamqb.com

ruthfett@parentteamqb.com