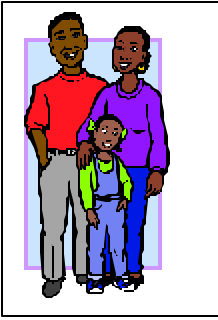


Families and Effective Parenting



Being a good parent is one of the toughest jobs you will ever have but it can also be the most rewarding as you see your children through each stage of development.

Below are some guidelines to follow as you journey through parenthood:

Be a Role Model - Children often learn how to handle things such as conflict, victories, frustration, successes, disappointment and other life events from the way their family handles it.

Listen to Each Other - Effective family communication can help to promote individual expression for all family members. Children included, will feel free to express themselves, which will ultimately allow for uniqueness and individual growth.

Always Apologize For Your Mistakes and Say You Are Sorry - An important skill for children to learn is to apologize when you make a mistake. It is difficult to learn but a very important part of growing up.

Recognize Other's Individuality - All family members should be encouraged to pursue their own interests. The world would be so boring if we were all the same.

Learning to Think Through the Consequences of Our Actions - There are times to be spontaneous and carefree and there are times to be cautious and analytical. For the times to be cautious and analytical, we need to have the skills to be able to think through and talk about the consequences of our own actions.

Communicate Family Rules and Values Openly - Part of family cohesion comes from the ability to identify common rules or guidelines to follow in different situations. It is also important to be able to identify and share the values that are expected to carry us through life such as honesty, integrity and commitment.

Be Consistent - As much as children sometimes fight it, children like routines. Routines help to provide boundaries and consistent expectations.

Encourage Humor and Lightheartedness – Everyone needs to have the opportunity to laugh, play and enjoy life to the fullest. Learning to not “sweat the small stuff” is an important tool to handling many life situations and humor is an integral part of that.

Respect Others – Simply put, recognize and accept that everyone is unique and worthy of respect.