

2022 Tuesday Tips for Parents

Jan 4

Happy New Year! Making Resolutions? What if you would resolve to know yourself better as a parent and see where you want to take your parenting to this year. Build a relationship with your kids? Communicate better? Love more?

Jan 11

Have you considered writing a family mission statement? We know that sounds like something for some big corporation but why does it have to be. Understanding a family's values and skills helps a family to communicate, organize, and live-in peace and harmony.

Start with a family meeting where everyone talks about what makes your family special. Make sure to note what that might be (For instance: we like to laugh, we play games, we ride bikes and are involved in our church)

Then bring all those thoughts into a paragraph about your family.

Jan 18

Do you know about the Law of Attraction? It is about energy, your energy as a person and as a parent. The bible talks about it like this; "What you sow, so shall you reap." Another way of putting it is "What energy you put out, is the energy you get back."

We have been taught to see it as coincidence when it in fact is something of our own creation. Drawing to us what we desire. What will your thoughts create for you today?

Jan 25

Parents often question their own abilities as a parent. Am I doing the right stuff? Am I doing the wrong stuff? Am I screwing up my child's life? Many times, it is when we finally hear ourselves saying the same old thing our parents use to say to us and knowing that is not working any longer. That is when we begin questioning ourselves about our parenting.

It is in the questioning of our abilities that we can start to have confidence in our parenting abilities. It is in the questioning that says we care and love our kids because we are willing to look at ourselves as parents and begin to change. Change or growth only begins when we feel uncomfortable and questions what is happening. Good parenting happens when we know we don't know it all and are willing to grow to where we can be.

Feb 1

Think about this: Which affect will be around in 25 years with your child? The fact that their room wasn't cleaned today or that you yelled at them about being lazy or a slob.

What we say to our kids affects their future! When they are young even the simplest negative word can be dramatic and stay with them throughout their life.

Feb 8

Family Game to Play at Dinner

What Ya Doin Game

The first person acts out some activity (For Instance: driving a car, climbing a mountain, hammering a nail, etc...) the second person (to the right or left) looks back at that person and asks "What Ya Doin". The first person who is doing an activity has to say some other activity besides the one they are actually doing. The second person has to now do the activity the first person said (not the one the first person is actually doing). The first person now stops their activity. The third person (to the right or left depending on the direction you are going around the table) looks back at that second person and asks "What Ya Doin". The second person who is doing an activity has to say some other activity besides the one they are actually doing. The third person has to now do the activity the second person said (not the one the second person is actually doing). Second person stops the activity. Now this continues around the table until somebody determines when to stop.

This game challenges the mind to do one thing while saying another, can incorporate charade type activity characteristic in doing the activities. Plus it is fun and gets the family laughing.

Feb 15

20 Proprioceptive Input Ideas for Calming a Child at Home and School

The proprioceptive system is input received through receptors in the joints and muscles with movement and heavy work. When these receptors are activated, body awareness is improved and the person knows where his/her body is in space. Children who tend to crave proprioceptive input:

- may overstuff their mouth with food;
- tend to give hard high fives,
- color with so much pressure the crayon breaks, or
- crash into things
- may hold a pencil so light that you can barely see it, or the pencil won't stay in their hand
- may have poor body awareness and bump into things, or have a low tolerance to pain and cry at even the slightest bump.

When your child appears to be craving proprioceptive input, provide them with some heavy work activities and combine with other types of input.

1. Carry Heavy Items

- Baskets filled with toys or books
- Groceries, not the bread or the eggs

2. Isometrics

- Pushups against a wall

3. Weighted Options

Only wear it for 20 minutes and then take it off. Put it back on again if needed after waiting at least 20 minutes.

- Weight belts
- Wrist weights

4. Yard Work

- Mowing the lawn
- Raking grass/leaves
- Pushing a wheelbarrow

5. Housework

- Vacuuming
- Mopping
- Watering the flowers

6. Chewy Candy Breaks

There are lots of chewy candy options that take a while to chomp and don't get stuck on furniture. Be cautious of too much sugar and make sure children brush their teeth.

7. Jump & Crash

- Jump on a trampoline
- Crash onto a crash pad

8. Sucking Through a Straw

- Pudding
- Applesauce
- Thick Smoothie

9. Animal Walks

- Crab walk
- Bear walk
- Army crawl

10. Heavy Blankets

- Heavy quilts at night
- Weighted blanket
- Weighted Lap Pad
- Paddy the Weighted Platypus

(Note: Ensure the child can pull these off themselves if needed.)

11. Swimming

Dive after weighted dive sticks thrown into pool.

12. "Hot Dog" Game

Have the child lie across the end of a blanket and roll the child in the blanket like a hot dog or squish the child with pillows or a crash pad

13. Johnny Sandwich

Have your child lie on a crash pad, or mattress or blanket, ask what they like on their sandwich and squish their arms, hands, legs, feet, gently their head and face while pretending to put mayonnaise, mustard, turkey and cheese or peanut butter and jelly all over their body. Then ask where else do you need jelly? And have them tell you where their body is craving more deep pressure. Make sure to press evenly and not too hard to injure the child.

14. Lifting

At school place chairs on desks at end of day and have them take chairs down at beginning of the day

15. Classroom Chores

- Erase the chalkboard
- Wash the dry erase board
- Clean the desks

16. Weighted Backpack

When walking from class to class, parents can put a notebook, book, or books, depending on the size for the child, into their backpack each day for the ride or walk to school. Be careful not to put more than 10-15% of the child's body weight in the backpack. Be cautious of low back pain and if this is a concern, try other things

17. Something to Kick

Tie theraband around the front legs of a chair or desk that the child can kick with his legs

18. Push It

- Push the lunch cart or grocery cart
- Carry the lunch bin to the cafeteria
- Push the library cart

19. Add Beanbags

- Use beanbag chairs in the classroom and at home
- Allow children to use them during silent reading time or relaxation time
- Lie over or under them during independent work tasks

(Note: Beanbag chairs offers a change in position and the benefit of consistent pressure input)

20. Pinching Allowed

- Prior to seat work, have child pinch, roll, pull Theraputty
- Hand exercisers,
- Pinch or roll balloons filled with flour
- Give child firm pressure on shoulders

Implement any number of these proprioceptive input ideas and you will discover a more regulated child ready to attend to the task at hand.

Article Excerpt Taken From: <http://special-ism.com/occupational-therapist-expert-britt-collins-reports-proprioeption-and-how-to-provide-this-input-to-your-child/>

Feb 22

Awareness: To be the best parents possible we must first must be open to healing ourselves. The first step in any kind of change or healing is awareness. Awareness of who we are, how we talk to ourselves, how we talk to others and how we act with ourselves and others. Listen to our own chatter in our minds is where we begin. Catching those messages and actions that when you drill down into them you will see a deeper message about yourself that most likely is not serving you. Awareness begins in listening to yourself and changing the messages that are not serving you or anyone else.

If you inside chatter has a "should", "but", "never", "always", "whatever", "fine!", "that's just the way it is" or the question that begins with "why?" it may be a message that is not serving you.

Begin with yourself in change before you consider changing anyone else.

March 1

In keeping with the awareness of oneself Pam Leo in her book "Connection Parenting" suggest keeping a "Parenting Journal" and in it that "Write what you recall about how your

parents expressed anger. Describe how you express anger. Do you ever express anger in the same way your parents did?"

Taken from Connection Parenting by Pam Leo

While you are at it maybe monitor all your different feelings? How did your parents address them? In doing this soul searching how do you think your expression of anger affects your children? How do the other emotions affect the kids? Do you show all your emotions to your kids? How might you change it to serve them better?

March 8

Consider this: What are the emotional needs your children have? This takes some special searching because it goes beyond their physical or social needs? Yes, they need a safe place to live, food on the table and activities for their growth. Emotional needs might be things such as: loving touch, self-esteem, love without conditions, emotional release, belonging, value, quiet reflection time, etc... Listening to your child begins this journey.

March 15

Behavior is a Foreign Language! When kids act out it is a message of a deeper problem. Behavior is not the problem. Do you know that language?

Reference: <http://www.focusedhealthyfamily.com> - Gina and Don Grothoff

Now this is one we repeat each year because it is important in understanding how children communicate. When their behavior goes off the chart it is time to look beyond the behavior and into what underlies that behavior. There, and only there, is where the change needs to happen. Help your child get past what most likely is an emotional issue that they need to find a way through.

March 22

Alternative to punishment: Express what you see happening with our criticizing either child's character. "I see that there is a broken dish on the floor and I heard arguing going on." Then take time to listen to each tell what happened and how they feel about it without inputting your own judgement. Most times there are deeper feelings going on than what shows outwardly. Once you listen to both you can work on how they can resolve this issue. This doesn't mean a forced "I'm sorry", it means giving each the opportunity to find how they might solve the issue.

Concept taken from book: "How To Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk" - Faber/Mazlish

March 29

Using praise to allow the child to praise themselves versus you praising them. Your attention as a parent is to comment on what they did not on who they are. So if they got an "A" on a test at school you might say something like "you really took the time to study and prepare for this test and I see the results paid off on your efforts" which could lead them to think to themselves "yea I really did do well in studying to get this grade". Their self-esteem and self-confidence is tacked and boosted.

Concept taken from book: "How To Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk" - Faber/Mazlish

April 5

FEAR – False Evidence Appearing Real

Not exactly sure where I got the definition of fear, yet I feel it fits well. Fear comes in many flavors; Fear of failure, fear of hurt, fear of being successful, fear of another, fear of the outdoors, etc... Fear is not keeping your hand from touching a hot stove, that is caution that was learned from your past. Someone chasing you with a stick on fire can cause fear. There is a difference. Fear a lot of the time comes from living in a What If world. What if I get into an accident? What if I lose my job? What if... these things are not true, but our minds take them as true. Fear can come from anxiety and at the same time start anxiety.

The first step in overcoming fear is acceptance in the thought as to what it really is – false evidence appearing real. It is a matter of working through what is underlying that fear. Like Franklin Roosevelt stated, “The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.”

April 12

Square Peg Round Hole

Back when I was a child many kids were diagnosed as “slow” or “dumb” or “stupid” because they could not pass certain tests. As many parents realized that those labels were really mislabels because of many reasons. Some had different learning styles that did not match what the schools designated as the way to learn. In other words putting a “square” child into a “round” hole that did not fit. Sometimes it would be what we now call dyslexia where letters in words get messed up. Sometimes they were not good at reading or they needed glasses but afraid to say anything and so they would miss out on learning. Children all learn differently, expecting a child to learn when the learning style goes against their ability to learn does not work. Pay attention to how your child learns, what they learn and what they put their passion towards. Then you will be able to teach a child.

April 19

“Your child’s adolescence is a time when you must step back and (so she can) begin to find her own way. As all parents of teens learn, there is a fine line to knowing when to offer advice, when to put your foot down and when to let your child make her own decisions.”

Taken from the book: The Sensory-Sensitive Child by Smith / Gouze

Think about this: When your child gets into their teens and maybe starts running with not the greatest crowd. Will you be glad you taught your child how to make decisions for themselves or happy they just follow what ever everyone else wants or what the group leader ends up telling them what to do.

April 26

"When I think about the words introvert and extrovert, I think about the ways in which people relate to themselves, and the world around them," Chelsea Connors, MS, NCC, LPC-A, Board Certified Coach and therapist said. She added that the biggest difference between the two is in how each prefers to spend their time.

You may be an introvert if:

- You enjoy spending time alone
- You prefer quality time with one or two people over spending time with bigger groups of friends

- You need alone time to rest and recharge after a busy workday or period of activity
- You can get lost in your thoughts easily and need time to process and think through most things

You may be an extrovert if:

- You prefer spending your time around other people and dislike being alone
- You like crowds, parties and other gatherings with lots of new people
- You need quality time with others to help you recharge
- You're outgoing, talkative and like being the center of attention

An added note from my observation is that another difference between introvert and extrovert is where they get their energy. Introvert recharge from quiet, internal reflection and downtime whereas extrovert draws a lot of the time from outside themselves.

May 3

Gratitude: Make it real each day for yourself, your spouse/partner and your kids. First make a list with your kids (they make theirs, you make yours and then one for all of you). Then each day read over the list to start the day. Always be willing to add new items to your list as they come about. List at least 10 items on each list you do. If you can't think of ten then you may want to address some issues going on for yourself or the others.

May 10

"My Baby she wrote me a letter" lyrics from a popular Joe Cocker song "The Letter". You want to connect with your child, no matter the age, write them a note or a letter!

The kinds of note you can write:

- Thank You – for a job well done
- Admiration – admiring how they handled something or just who they have become
- Correction or Reminder: - letting them know in a compassionate way that they did something not so well or forgot something
- Thinking About them – just a note maybe simple like a picture of a smile or words "Thinking About You"
- Direction or Guidance – "Tomorrow morning please take the clothes from the washer and put them into the dryer on medium"
- For no reason but to say "Hi"
- Letters – letters with your dreams and visions or telling some of your life story or about your hopes for them or the family

(I have found letters and notes that I have written to my kids being stored away which I believe they treasure. I only wish I would have gotten more from my dad.)

May 17

Play Like a Kid: It doesn't matter their age, you can play what they are playing or doing. When they are young toddlers you can get on their level playing blocks. When they are adolescence, you can go outside and play soccer with them. Teens maybe get into an online game with them. Whatever their age find their passion and do it with them or at least be there to hear about it or watch it. When they become adults go to the movies with them or to a sports game.

It is about giving them time and love, it is more valuable than money and success.

May 24

Cook with your kids. The results are good food, connection between parent and child plus teaches them to cook. There is a type of bond that can happen in the kitchen that brings a parent closer to their children. Food can bring out the warmth and love in anyone.

May 31

Parents can help their child (or themselves) make this recording when they worry or stress over things.

Make a Recording

Write down all of your worries, just as they sound in your head you can use what you wrote above for "When my anxiety talks, it says ...". Then record your worries on a phone or digital recorder (have your parent help you with the set up). When doing the recording, remember to make it sound exactly as it sounds in your head.

For example, let's say you are afraid of a dog jumping on you then you would record the thought as it sounds when you think "What if that dog jumps on me?" (you wouldn't say "Sometimes I worry that a dog will jump on me"). We want it to sound just like it sounds in your head, so the recording should be in your voice. You can do a worry tape or an uncertainty training recording ("It is always possible that a dog will jump on me"), or both. It is best to do both and then listen to both recordings. Remember that it gets worse before it gets easier, and that while many people don't like to hear the worries on a recording, when you listen to it over and over for 10-20 minutes a day for 2-4 weeks, your worries will become boring to you. Doing this works 100% of the time!

Excerpt from the book: Anxiety-Free Kids: An Interactive Guide for Parents and Children by Bonnie Zucker

June 7

"Yet 2 to 10 percent of the commercial chemicals have been tested for safety on adult humans. Rarely is testing done on Children, whose developing bodies tend to be far more sensitive to foreign substances than adult bodies. Many chemicals stimulate or block estrogen and other hormones. These endocrine disrupters may be related to increased incidents of early puberty in children and infertility, lower sperm counts, testicular cancer and breast cancer in adults. Furthermore, scientific studies have yet to verify how our excess of chemicals affect our central nervous system, immune system and limbic system and how our bodies integrate or eliminate chemicals."

"Fortunately, you can take measures to lesson your exposure to chemicals, particularly in your home. More and more retailers now sell "eco-products" that contain minimal or no VOCs (volatile organic chemicals) and other chemicals. Organic shampoos, nonchemical cleaners, special filters for ducts, furnaces and air conditioners, and even mattresses made with organic cotton are among the growing array of environmentally sound products."

Excerpt from the book: Holistic Parenting by: Lynn Wiese Sneyd

June 14

What is Faith?

"In the most general sense, faith is a personal awareness of our connection to a universal benevolence, a glory, an enduring love that permeates everything. This love has many names: God, Goddess, Universe, Divine Spirit, The Absolute, Yahweh, Gaia. Regardless of what term you use-I'll us "God"-faith is a personal viewpoint of the interconnectedness of people, nature, Earth, solar systems and the universe.

Faith is inborn. It is not a product of organized religion although religion certainly can foster faith."

June 21

Investigate your health choices, there is a lot more to healthcare than the Allopathic or Traditional Medicine (they are both the same thing). There are holistic and alternative methods to healthcare and though those terms are used interchangeably there tends to be some differences.

“Alternative medicine is a term that **describes medical treatments that are used instead use of traditional (mainstream) therapies**. Some people also refer to it as “integrative,” or “complementary” medicine. More than half of adults in the United States say they use some form of alternative medicine.”

“Holistic medicine is **a form of healing that considers** the whole person -- body, mind, spirit, and emotions -- in the quest for optimal health and wellness. ... A holistic doctor may use all forms of health care, from conventional medication to alternative therapies, to treat a patient.

Definitions from: <https://www.webmd.com>

June 28

One of the most widely used classification structures, developed by NCCAM (2000), divides CAM (complementary and alternative medicine) modalities into five categories:

- Alternative medical systems (Chinese Medicine, Ayurvedic Medicine, Homeopathy, and Naturopathy)
- Mind-body interventions (Meditation, Prayer, and Mental Healing)
- Biologically based treatments (specialized diets, herbal products, and other natural products)
- Manipulative and body-based methods (Massage, Chiropractic)
- Energy therapies (Emotional Freedom Techniques, Qi Gong, Reiki, and Healing or Therapeutic touch)

Excerpt taken from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>

Consider these and more for the whole family. Getting kids acclimated to natural healing methods will serve them their entire lives. The reason these are called complimentary is because they can work along with traditional medicine. When they do they are considered integrative.

July 5

In their book, *The Sensory-Sensitive Child*, Karen A. Smith, Ph.D. and Karen R. Gouze, Ph.D. talk about what that means and gives solid ideas on what you can do to help that child. Below and in the coming weeks we will be sharing those tips (excerpts) from their book.

“Helping your child know himself and teaching him to come to terms with the ways in which his sensory processing problems affect his behavior are the most important things you can do to ease his frustrations. Remember: he takes his cues from you. Show him by example how to accept and respect himself.

Excerpt from the book: *The Sensory-Sensitive Child* by Karen A. Smith, Ph.D. and Karen R. Gouze, Ph.D.

Over the next 5 weeks we will be sharing those (Ideas) tips with you.

There are 3 main types of sensory processing disorders:

- Sensory Modulation Disorder (SMD)

- Sensory-Based Motor Disorder (SBMD)
- Sensory Discrimination Disorder.

Above excerpt taken from: <http://sensationalkidsot.com.au>

Children may have sensory problems in eight main areas:

- Visual/Sight.
- Tactile/Touch.
- Olfactory/Smell.
- Auditory/Sound.
- Gustatory/Taste.
- Vestibular/Body Movements.
- Proprioception/Body Awareness.

Above excerpt taken from <https://otsimo.com>

July 12

(Tip One)

“Get to know your child's sensory sensitivities. The more you understand about his sensory needs, the better prepared you will be to help him through the day. Don't sit in the waiting room or run errands while he is in his occupational therapy session. Observe. Take notes. Try to figure out what they are doing. And by all means, tell your child's therapist about the problems he is having at home and at school. Ask for her advice and practical suggestions. Learn as much from her as you can.”

Excerpt from the book: *The Sensory-Sensitive Child* by Karen A. Smith, Ph.D. and Karen R. Gouze, Ph.D.

July 19

(Tip Two)

“Tune in to your own sensory needs. Pay attention to what is alerting and calming for you, then you can begin to develop a frame-work for understanding your child's sensory needs and reactions.”

Excerpt from the book: *The Sensory-Sensitive Child* by Karen A. Smith, Ph.D. and Karen R. Gouze, Ph.D.

July 26

(Tip Three)

“In any situation, be willing to ask yourself: Is there a sensory piece to this problem? No matter how sure you are that this is not a sensory integration moment, just ask yourself the question. No matter how tired or fed up you are, no matter how inappropriate or unacceptable the behavior is, just raise the question.”

Excerpt from the book: *The Sensory-Sensitive Child* by Karen A. Smith, Ph.D. and Karen R. Gouze, Ph.D.

Aug 2

(Tip Four)

“Respect your child as a unique individual. There is no one like him on the planet. Literally. Don't criticize him for being different. As much as possible (and on many days it will not seem possible), honor his individuality. When Evan came home from second grade with the class award for uniqueness, Karen S. had to agree that it was well earned. Although it struck her as a back-handed compliment, Evan was proud of his award. It felt like an honest recognition of who he was, and he knew he deserved it. Find a way to sincerely celebrate who child as a unique individual. There is no one else your child is.”

Excerpt from the book: The Sensory-Sensitive Child by Karen A. Smith, Ph.D. and Karen R. Gouze, Ph.D.

Aug 9

(Tip Five)

“Emphasize his likability factor-that is, accentuate the positive. Ayres said it best: "The child with a sensory integrative problem who is accepted and supported by his parents is the one who can make a go of it in life." The others, she feared, are likely to lose faith in themselves. Finding a way to genuinely like your child, even at his most difficult, is perhaps the greatest investment you can make in his future.”

Excerpt from the book: The Sensory-Sensitive Child by Karen A. Smith, Ph.D. and Karen R. Gouze, Ph.D.

Aug 16

A child's journey to independence is not a journey of separating from Mom and Dad, it is a journey of self-awareness that needs to feel security, love and attention. Autonomy is how a child handles independence, it is where self-confidence and self-esteem are built. We have to give our kids the skills to become autonomous and here are some ways in which we can do that:

1. Let children make choices
2. Show respect for struggles
3. Don't ask too many questions
4. Don't rush to answer questions
5. Encourage children to use resources outside of the home.
6. Don't take away hope

Concepts taken from: Focused Healthy Family's Workshop "How To Talk So Kids Will Listen" based on a book by the same name.

Aug 23

You may get the desired results instantly when you punish, criticize or yell at your child, but the long-term effects can be harmful. When we use any of those tactics to get what you want or correct a behavior your child will take it one of two ways. Some children will become angry and resentful, "I'll show you, next time I won't get caught" or "I hate mom", the resentment can last a lifetime. Other children turn on themselves and take the punishment internally, "I must be a bad kid that Dad got that

mad." Or "It is all my fault that Dad had to hit me." and down they go. In either case the child's self-esteem and confidence take a major hit.

Aug 30

When is it best to teach a child to cook? It is a tough question to answer because each child is different, different maturity levels, different skill sets and different personalities so it is hard to set a certain standard age.

If you decide to do this, I recommend:

Cooking - you start simple with adult supervision, maybe they only help you mix ingredients then the next time they do a little bit of the cooking or baking with your help and it slowly progresses to more and more involvement. Other point is to make it fun.

Sep 6

When is it best to give a child a key and leave them alone at home? These are tough questions to answer because each child is different, different maturity levels, different skill sets and different personalities so it is hard to set a certain standard age.

If you decide to do this, I recommend:

First is have the key with a friend or neighbor who gives them the key on their way home and maybe goes in the house with them to get them started on homework or something. Eventually, as they show more and more responsibility you let them carry the key.

As far as staying on their own - again starting out small leaving them alone for 15 min and see how it goes. Making sure they have connection with you with a phone or text. Making sure they understand what to do in case of emergency (helps to write a note with key phone numbers and what to do in case). Be careful not to make them paranoid or anxious, might talk to them beforehand not on the day about what to do in case of fire or emergency. On the day of it leave it all in a note. Again, maybe having a neighbor or friend who is close by knowing what you are doing and ready to possibly step in. Then you slowly increase time as they become more comfortable. You can also set them up with projects, shows or other things that keep them and their minds occupied.

Sep 13

10 Words You ~~Should~~ (Oops) Best Not Say

1. Should instead use **Wish** - Example: "I wish I hadn't done that"
2. Always instead use **There are times** - Example "There are times when I feel upset with you."
3. Never instead use **Sometimes** - Example: "Sometimes you forget to take the trash out."
4. Why instead use **What** - Example: "What is this problem coming to me for?"
5. But instead use **The Problem Is...** - Example: "You did a good job, the problem is you forgot..."
6. Ought instead use **I would prefer...** Example: "I would prefer you to smoke outside."
7. Must instead use **It is important to consider...** Example: It would be important for me to consider looking for a new job.
8. Whatever instead use **It is your choice...** Example: "It is your choice to think that way."

9. Gotta (really Got To) These last two words Gotta and Haveto tend to put pressure on yourself, so it would be more helpful to soften the statements – Example: Instead of “I gotta get more money.” “Might be: “I am finding ways to bring more money to myself.”
10. Haveto (really Have To): Instead of “I have to get this work done.” Might be: “I am doing my best to get this work done.”

Sep 20

What you can do to help someone sleep better.

If you suspect that a child might have a sleep disorder, the first step is to follow these four basic principles of "sleep hygiene."

1. Respect your bed! Beds are for sleeping, not doing homework, calling friends, watching TV, instant messaging, or playing video games. When a bed is used for fun and stimulating activities, the brain becomes conditioned to think of it as a place for alertness, not sleep. If space is an issue, consider a foldaway or drop-down bed or a futon that can be made into a sofa during the day.
2. Get plenty of exercise, but not too close to bedtime. Children who lie around all day often have difficulty falling asleep. Physically active days promote restful sleep.
3. Establish regular sleep/wake times. Children with attention problems often have irregular sleep patterns. Establishing regular sleep/wake times can help them develop a more regular sleep cycle.
4. Use background noise. Some children's brains are just too active to fall asleep. A white noise generator or favorite musical recording can provide enough calm to help them fall asleep. Children with auditory distractibility who wake up at every little noise can also benefit.

Excerpts of the 4 Steps taken from the book: The Mislabeled Child by Brock Eide and Fernette Eide

Additional ideas about sleep:

5. Have a quiet winddown time in the house – soft music and dimmer lighting
6. Warm bath which might include Epson salt
7. Reading or drawing (best if not done on a computer)
8. Set up a night time routine
9. If you have a snack then make it sleep helpful foods such as: Chamomile Tea, pumpkin seeds, peanut butter or turkey.

Sep 27

Don't be afraid to use bigger, more complex words around your children. Even if they don't understand the words they will get more accustomed to the words and expand their own vocabulary. Over time through context and learning they will know the meaning of the words.

Gina and I have always believed it is part of mutual respect between parent and child not to talk down to them. We always tried to talk respectfully and got down on their level instead of towering over them.

Oct 4

In the Secret Book and Movie they talk about Law of Attraction and state this:

“People have a tendency to look at the things that they want and say, “Yes, I like that and I want that.” However, they look at things that they don’t want and give them just as much , if not more, with the idea that they can stamp it out, eliminate it, obliterate it...We tend to fight everything we don’t want, which actually creates more of the fight.”

Quoted from Lisa Nichols in the Secret

The point here again is the Law of Attraction – which basically states the energy you put out is the energy you will receive back. The tough part of this is that most of the time we will focus first on what we desire but within minutes we turn our focus on the lack of what we want. More energy goes towards that and what we receive is more lack.

Oct 11

As Parents we tend to become “givers” or “pleasers” where our kids and family come first and we fall down the list of taking care of ourselves. I see a lot of this in my practice working with parents. Being a “giver” or “pleaser” leads to burnout because we have thrown ourselves off of the balance of give and receive. We give all our “fuel” out without getting any of it back. It is a burnout place.

These are the things that tend to happen:

1. We run out of energy to take care of anyone especially ourselves
2. Over time we teach those around us not to give to us (because we don’t allow receiving)
3. When we do burn out or begin to burn out we don’t really have anyone to support our needs
4. We rob others from the joy of giving to us

What can you do:

1. Teach those around you that you need support
2. Learn to ask for what you want – understanding that the other person you ask is an adult who has the choice to say yes or no to your request. How they respond is their thing not yours.
3. Focus on your self-care first
4. Learn to say “NO”
5. Allow others to give to you

Oct 18

Holidays: Plan Events Early and Wisely: Nowadays with the advent of the internet you have so many sites that give you the events going on around your town. The holidays are no exceptions, the internet is a wonderful place to find events around the holidays: decorated houses to see, parties to attend, holiday shows, Santa Claus visits and so much more. So it is easy and wise to plan early to see some of the best events. It is recommended to get your kids involved in these plans. Do what your kids want to do and then plan something without them for you and your significant other on a separate occasion. Just don’t overdo it by trying to attend an event every night or by filling all of your weekends. Burnout, exhaustion, stress and anxiety can result from trying to do too much. Pick the things that you and your children really want to do and be sure to allow down time. Oct 12

Oct 25

Holidays: Know Your Limitation: You want to do it all and have the perfect Christmas so therefore you pile on the expectations with a long to-do list. You have to stand in line on Black Friday to get the best deal on all the “must have” gifts. You want to make the biggest and most elaborate Christmas dinner. You want to decorate the house, have the best neighborhood light display and attend all of the holiday gatherings. Yet, you have all of your regular responsibilities that already take all of your time such as your job, housework, helping your kids with homework and getting them to their activities. So how do you do it all? You need to understand your limitations, learn to say no, and prioritize based on what really matters to your family. Oct 19

Nov 1

Holidays: Get Your Kids Involved: What I find so touching are parents who involve their kids in the holidays. You just want to get it done: the cooking, the wrapping, the planning, the shopping. You want it done perfectly, whether it be the prettiest packages or picture perfect pies. If you involve your kids in the process, it allows their energy to be channeled in a constructive way and we can learn from our children how to appreciate the simple things and enjoy the process of preparing for the holidays.

In my family we wrap most of our gifts in brown paper bags and then decorate the package with stickers, drawings and messages of holiday cheer. You can also decorate the paper first including painted hand prints and then use it to wrap the gifts. By letting the children wrap the gifts, you engage them in the process and free up some of your time. They might not look perfect, but those receiving the gifts will know they were wrapped with love. You can also wrap the gifts together creating memories and even a holiday tradition that will remain with them longer than the gifts you give them. Oct 26

Nov 8

Holidays: Tap: EFT tapping is an excellent tool to eliminate the stress, anxiety and depression that can happen during the holiday. EFT tapping is the process of self tapping on the meridians or acupressure points to improve your physical, emotional and spiritual functioning. EFT is about aligning your energy for your best functioning and health. That is why it is said “What you sow, so shall you reap!” This can also be said as “the energy you put out is the energy you get back”. Giving out good energy gets back good energy. Having a positive and uplifting energy at Christmas is especially important because there is so much that takes our energy that we need all we can get. What energy do you want for the holiday?

In order to help you with your energy, I have included with this a “How To Tap instructions” and a Holiday tapping script. Try this tapping for the holidays to relax and enjoy the holidays. To find out more about EFT tapping and what it can do for you go to: www.focusedhealthyfamily.com Nov 2

Nov 15

Holidays: Don't Rush Your Kids: One big lesson my wife taught me about my kids is not to rush them. That is not easy for me because of my type A personality. I often want to just get moving and get it done. When you are visiting friends, family or fun places, it is helpful to allow them enough time and to know how much time is enjoyable for them. Many kids find a 15 or 30 minute warning prior to leaving useful as well as further reminders of how much time is left, i.e. 10 minutes, 2 minutes. Would you like to be pulled from a meeting or from a project you are working on with no notice or time to prepare? Children don't like to be yanked out of a situation and told, “it's time to go now”, especially when they are having fun. Some children need time to warm up and might not be able to enjoy themselves with people they do not know or unfamiliar family members or a new activity until they have had adjustment time. And others may only be able to handle a short visit. Pay attention to your children and know what they need for all the holiday gatherings and events. Nov 9

Nov 22

Holidays: Respect Your Kid's Feelings: It is so easy to say to a child "not now, can't you see I am busy" or "I have got to get this done in order to have a good Christmas" or just the simple "I don't have time now". Even worse in my book is when they come to you with an idea or a specific gift they want or a problem and your reply shuts them down. "We can't afford that", "that is not true" or "that is just stupid".

Those messages can damage a child's self esteem and undermine their initiative and independence. Your children are humans too and deserve some respect. Listening to them and their feelings can make a world of difference. One example my wife and I use for Christmas wishes, especially ones you know you cannot afford is to respond to their wish by simply saying "Oh, that is a wonderful idea, why don't you make a list of things you would like". Many times the act of creating the wish list satisfies their wanting and sometimes they forget or move on to something else by the time the holidays come. Nov 16

Nov 29

Holidays: Eat Right: Grandma's famous pumpkin pie, those wonderful gingerbread cookies, colorful candy canes and all the delicious and exotic treats you have during the holidays can be some of the biggest disruptors of the holidays. Sugar, gluten, hydrogenated oils, dyes and all the chemicals in food can turn an adult or child into a wild beast. You want to give your kids the joys of the taste, smells and feelings of the holidays but to what cost. It is important for you to watch labels, make your own treats and plan ahead.

Feeding your kids healthy, nutritious food before going to grandmas or that holiday party will minimize eating the unhealthy, processed foods. Cutting back on sugar or eating sugary items earlier in the day can help in the evening when it is time for sleep. Nov 23

After a large holiday meal, take time to do an activity such as walking or playing outside. Do this along with your kids to encourage the activity and maintain your health. It might not be easy to do but the results can last a lifetime.

Dec 6

Holidays: Don't Overdue Travel: "We have to visit both sets of grandparents and our great Aunt, and..." What would the Holidays be without those trips? Pack up the car once more, cook one more pie and don't forget the gifts. Did you remember the airline tickets? Should you leave two hours early for the flight? What about the memories they create? Visits with family and friends do create good memories. They can also create horrible memories of exhausted parents, stressed out kids and family arguments. Would it not be better to stretch out the holiday travels over several months and not try to make all of those trips within a month or a week? Christmas and the holidays do not have to be about a particular day. My own extended family now celebrates "Thanksmas" between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Holidays are a time to enjoy family, friendship and love no matter when it happens. And keep in mind that winter travel can be delayed, interrupted and cancelled due to weather conditions. Create your own personal holiday traditions. Nov 30

Dec 13

Holidays: Remember: It is easy to get lost in the commercial holiday expectations and pressures. You want to do it all and have the perfect holiday. In doing all of this, you often forget the real meaning of the holidays. No matter your religious beliefs, it comes down to love and spending time with the people you love. If you put love at the top of your list, as well as foremost in your mind and remember to keep love a priority throughout the whole season, I believe your holidays will be the best.

One particular Christmas when I was a small child, my family was enjoying the holidays and yet, if we would have known what was coming would we have changed how we did our holidays? It wasn't that we weren't loving and thoughtful of each other but we were wrapped in the gifts and hype of the season. That holiday was the last holiday we would spend with my sister for she passed away from a heart condition shortly after the

holidays. So an important lesson is to remember what the holidays are truly about and be in that place always.
Dec 7

Dec 20

Holidays: Laugh and Breathe: It is easy to forget with the rush, pressure and excitement of the holidays that you need to breathe and laugh to really enjoy it all. Taking big deep breaths throughout your whole day and especially when you are panicked or stressed is extremely important. Teaching your kids to properly breathe can help them to manage their emotions too. Good, deep breaths can increase blood flow, lower stress and rejuvenate cells in the body. Belly breathing can also help during panic attacks to take pressure off of the chest and relieve the panic. I like to use raspberry breathing to help get kids to breathe and giggle at the same time.

Holidays: Spend time not money: The best gift you can give to your kids and anyone is the gift of yourself: your time, energy and attention. Memories made together will be remembered and cherished more than an iPhone, video game, or any toy.

Dec 27

Holidays: Create your own New Year Traditions: Our family has participated in a Burning Bowl and Letters to God (or the universe) ceremony each New Year's Eve at our local Unity Church. The ceremony involved writing down something(s) that you wanted to release from the year, like negative or self-limiting beliefs. We then paraded outside to a fire pit where we released our papers into the fire. The second part of the ceremony involved writing a letter to God, or your future self. You write the letter as if it is now the end of the next year and write about all the good that has happened over the year, all the things you have manifested which can be both physical like a new home as well as things like feeling healthier, exercising regularly, or spending more time with your family doing things you all enjoy. Unity would hold onto our letters sealed in an envelope that we self-addressed. They would then mail it to us in late October or early November. The first time we participated in this ceremony, our oldest child was about 4 years old and we wrote down his items for him. When our younger children were small, their letter might be a picture or just scribbles. It has always been exciting to receive the letters in the mail later that year and then read them together.