

6 Parenting Goals to Start the New Year

Helping to make your family stronger, safer and more harmonious may not require a complete overhaul, but rather a few strategic tweaks.

Here are a half dozen concrete and tangible parenting goals to set for the year ahead.

1. [Get everyone vaccinated for flu](#). The [flu shot](#) is the best way to protect yourself, your children, and other loved ones from the flu. It's especially important this year as [COVID-19](#) still spreads. [Call your pediatrician](#) to make sure your children are up-to-date on other immunizations. Teach them good [hand hygiene](#) habits as a way to help prevent the spread of germs.
2. [Do good digital](#). What are your kids watching on TV and online? Devote some time to researching [age-appropriate media](#). Make a [family media use plan](#), and try to prevent [gaming](#) from becoming an unhealthy habit. Remember that screen time shouldn't always be alone time. Watch a show together. Play a video game together. Understand what they are doing and be a part of it.

3. **Get outside more.** Spending time [outdoors](#) can be a great [mood booster](#), and help families get [physical activity](#) and [vitamin D](#) while enjoying time in nature. Spending time outside also give your child's [eyes](#) a healthy screen-time break.
4. **Keep kids riding rear-facing as long as possible**, up to the limits of their car seat. This will include virtually all children under 2 and most children up to age 4. If you are past the car-seat stage of parenting, congrats! If you're still in the thick of it, check for any new car seat laws that may be going into effect in your state in the new year. Remind anyone who transports your child by car.
5. **Take a CPR class & learn to use an AED.** Cardiac arrest kills more than 7,000 children and more than 350,000 adults every year outside a hospital setting. Some of these deaths could be prevented by bystanders with [training](#) in basic life-saving skills or access to an AED machine. When a child is not breathing in a [drowning emergency](#), for example, CPR should begin immediately. Ask your pediatrician to recommend classes that may be available near you.
6. **Practice some self-care.** When was the last time you had a check-up? Got proper rest? Once a baby is no longer a part of your body, it's easy to forget that tight

association between how you care for yourself and how you care for your child's health. We also know [depression and anxiety](#) can happen to both moms and [dads during and after pregnancy](#). If this is you, [you are not alone. Help is near.](#)

More information:

- [Healthy New Year's Resolutions for Children & Teens](#)
- [Kindness: How a Simple Act Can Make a Big Difference](#)
- [Sleep Tips for Your Family's Mental Health](#)