

To Raise Exceptional Children, Teach Them These 7 Values

Any fact or bit of knowledge we teach a child might be obsolete when they are adults, but values endure through all changes.

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To parent our children to be exceptional, we must allow our children to experience "optimal levels of frustration." It is our job to love and support them through their struggles, but to refrain from solving their problems for them.

We need to equip our children with the insight that their struggles and failures serve as master teachers that help grow them into stronger, more successful people. It is important we help our children overcome the emotional blocks they face, which breed thoughts of small-mindedness and create self-imposed limitations. We must teach them to set high standards for themselves and to never apologize for striving to live up to those higher standards. Our goal as parents should be to encourage our children to think as big as they can, expect nothing less than the best, to have courage and, most importantly, to be kind.

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1. Teamwork

To be successful, our children must understand the value that others hold in their lives. We must teach them that fundamental to happiness and success are healthy, supportive and successful relationships. We must encourage our children to get involved in extracurricular activities and give them chores and responsibilities in the home as ways to garner a sense of teamwork into their repertoire of life skills.

It is essential we also involve ourselves in their lives, as this gives us the opportunity to set the standards for the work they need to accomplish inside and outside of the home. The standards we set must be challenging, yet achievable. In doing this, we teach our children to be a valuable asset to each environment they're a part of. The value of teamwork keeps our children from being self-centered and entitled. We must help our children understand they can only go so far in life alone. Our goal must be to show our children that joining forces with others enhances each person's personal power and elevates the success of all.

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2. Self-care

Personal power and complacency cannot co-exist. We must parent our children to dedicate time and energy whenever necessary to ensure that no important areas of what they need to accomplish are being neglected.

They deserve to have work-time and free-time, where they are able to take a minute to feel unrestricted from the weight of their responsibilities. The easiest way to balance work-life for our children is to require they put their responsibilities first and free-time second. This value helps them manage their own lives in a highly effective way. Putting free-time second allows our children to not be bogged down with nagging responsibilities during their free-time, because they have none. When we teach our children to set high standards in all areas of their lives, they will come to see that their hard work rewards their free-time and vice versa.

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3. Seeing possibilities where others see problems

When we teach our children to approach their challenges with a belief in solutions, this encourages them to engage in the creative process of examining and architecting alternate routes up the mountain. Being solution-focused safeguards our children from defeatist thinking. It is our job to teach them that if they cannot find a solution, they must open their mind, seek the advice of others and apply new ideas and suggestions until barriers are removed and their problem is solved. When we parent in this way, our children learn that life is full of possibility when they apply persistence and consistency in thought and action towards solving their problems. When solutions are the focus, we teach our children the all-important skill of pivoting in life whenever necessary.

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4. Motivation

To grow our children in their personal power, we must parent them with a "motivation mindset" by teaching them to consistently monitor, evaluate and adjust to the work ahead of them and their attitude about it and to stay clear of sabotaging beliefs that may drive complacency, too much time on electronics and other roadblocks that interfere in them living up to their higher standards.

One of the best ways to keep our children motivated is to teach them to write things down as a method of defining their goals and direction. Encouragement, validation and support must be consistent in our parenting. Our children want to live up to our expectations and our acknowledgement of their effort is almost always what they experience as

their greatest reward.

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5. Time management

One of the most important values we teach our children is "the power of now."

Success is deeply rooted in having exceptional time-management skills. We must parent our children to get their most important tasks accomplished first. It is natural to want to avoid stress, but if we can teach our children to get their most stressful tasks done first, the rest of the work they need to accomplish will be much easier.

When our children get caught in the small non-urgent tasks, it pulls them away from the more important aims requiring their attention. It is also important to teach our children to be on time or early to all commitments. No one likes dealing with people who are chronically late. We must parent our children to understand that being on time makes other people respect them and to see them as dependable.

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6. Accepting responsibility

For our children to be and feel successful we must parent them to understand that whatever happens in their life or career, the best path to follow is always to take responsibility for the outcomes, both positive and negative, which are the result of their efforts. If they make a mistake, we must encourage them to see their mistake as a self-created learning experience. We must help them examine what they need to shift and change to avoid making this same mistake in the future. Taking responsibility allows our children to learn the

value of humility and to be flexible enough in their thinking to change their approach whenever necessary. We must parent our children to believe that true power is understanding that mistakes gift them with more than they take away from them. It is from their mistakes that all of their new directions will arise. It is important for our children to understand that powerful leadership is not about ego; it is about humility and a willingness to learn.

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7. Kindness

There is no greater a value to teach our children than the value of kindness. Kindness does not turn our children into sappy pushovers. It turns them into classy people who possess good character.

We must teach our children that all people have value and that they can deliver both good and bad news to others with a sense of grace. We must parent our children to be kind to themselves, as our children can be so hard on themselves when things are challenging them. When we are kind to our children, our children believe we see them as deeply valuable. When our children believe that we see them as valuable, they learn to value themselves. Their belief in their personal value sets them up to live their lives with a solid sense of confidence in who they are and what they have to offer. As parents we want to create an emotional environment of kindness that is infectious, contagious and advantageous to the children we are raising. Kindness will take our children further in life than any other human characteristic.

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