9 TIPS FOR RAISING UNSPOILED KIDS

Our most important role is raising our kids to become capable, well-adjusted human beings. Here are nine tips adapted from my book Parents Do Make a Difference that enhance our parenting success in reaching that critical goal.

1. The formula for raising well-adjusted kids has two parts: nurture and limits. Is your parenting style evenly balanced between the two parts or are you emphasizing one element more than the other?

2. Good parenting is not about making sure your child is happy. A big part of it is about helping him or her learn to deal confidently with setbacks and adversities that are an inevitable part of life. Constantly rescuing kids from their frustrations does not help them learn critical coping skills.

3. Unspoiled kids have learned to not always put themselves first, but instead to consider the needs of others. Are you emphasizing the virtues of empathy and kindness with your child?

4. Seriously ask yourself, "Am I raising my child to be self-reliant and financially capable?" One of our biggest jobs is to help our kids learn to live successfully on their own. Doing so means they will need to learn how to manage their own money and not expect handouts from us.

5. Add "no" to your vocabulary and don't feel guilty about using it with your kids. Always giving kids what they want does not help kids learn that you don't always get what you want in life.

6. Help your child recognize that it really is better to give than to receive by practicing it.

7. The best gifts to give kids are intangible; your child needs your presence more than your presents.

8. Parenting is not a popularity contest! Your child looks to you to be his/her parent more than his/her friend. There are many times that you will have to make choices that aren't always the choices your child will like. Once you make them, stick by them; you are always in charge.

9. Remember: you do make a difference! How your child turns out is greatly determined by what you prioritize and model while he/she is growing up.

Michele Borba, Ed.D., is the author of several books, including Parents Do Make A Difference, Character Builders, and Esteem Builders. You can learn more about Dr. Borba at www.MicheleBorba.com and/or www.ParentingBookmark.com.
10 Ways To Help Kids To Really Say No And Buck Peer Pressure

What were you thinking?" "But didn't you tell the kids it wasn't right?" "You did what?!@!" Are you concerned that your kid always seems to go along with the crowd? Does he have a tough time speaking up and letting his opinions be known? Have you noticed that your child can be easily swayed to do what the other kids want? Some kids may call him a Wimp or a Scaredy Cat, your terms may be more along the lines of submissive, follower or even push over. This may not seem such a big deal now, but peer pressure gets nothing but tougher as kids get older. After all, if he has a tough time saying "no" to the tamer dilemmas of younger kids, fast forward your concerns to the kinds of wilder, scarier issues he may face later. And there is cause for some concern. A Time/Nickelodeon survey of 991 kids ages nine to fourteen revealed 36 percent feel pressure from peers to smoke marijuana, 40 percent feel pressure to have sex, 36 percent feel pressure to shoplift, and four out of ten feel pressure to drink.

Here's the good news though: assertive skills can be taught to kids. Though it is never too late, the sooner parents start boosting this friendship skill builder, the greater your child's confidence will be in social settings, and the easier you'll sleep. Here are a few strategies from my book, Nobody Likes Me, Everybody Hates Me, you can use to help your child buck the negative peer pressure and stand up to peers.

Bring the issue into the open. If your kid is suffering from a lack of assertive skills, it may be very hard for him to talk about this problem so take the lead. "I noticed during play group today Johnny told you to throw sand in the sink, and you did it. You know better. So let's talk about why you went along." "You know Rene's house is off limits, but you went along with the group anyway. You have to learn to stand up to your friends and do what you know is right."

Share your beliefs. Parents who raise assertive kids who can stand up for their beliefs don't do so by accident. They make sure their children know what they stand for. "In our family we don't watch violent movies. Plain and simple. So tell your friends you can't go." "I don't care if all your friends use four-letter words, for you that's forbidden." "The next time a friend dares you to smoke a cigarette, just stand up and walk out. You need to stick up for what you know is right. I know how much you hate smoking."

Stop rescuing. If your role has been apologizing, explaining, or basically "doing" for your child, then stop. You child will never learn how to stand up for himself. Instead, he'll forever by relying on you.

Model assertiveness. If you want your child to be confident, assertive, and stand up for his beliefs, make sure you display those behaviors. Kids mimic what they see.

Teach how to say no. Ask your child to choose phrases he is most comfortable using. "No" can be said alone: "NO!" It can also be followed by a reason: "No, it's just not my style." "No thanks. My parents would kill me." "No, I don't feel like doing that." "No, I don't want to." "No. I have to get home and I'm already late." The child could suggest an alternative: "No. Let's think of something else." "Nope. How about we go to the skate park instead?" Tell your child it's not his job to change your friend's mind, but to stay true to his beliefs.
Teach confident body language. Push-over kids usually stand with heads down, shoulders slumped, arms and knees quivering, and eyes downcast. So even if he says "no" to his friends, his body sends a far different message and his words will have little credibility. So it's crucial to teach your child assertive body posture: hold your head high, shoulders slightly back, look your friend in the eye and use a confident, firm tone of voice. It will help your child see what the confident body posture looks like so she can use it herself. So role play with your child the "confident look" and the "hesitant look." Then encourage your child to be on the look-out for "confident" or "hesitant" posture in other people. Look everywhere: at the mall, on the playground, even television and movie actors. Soon your child will instantly be able to spot confident posture and copy and use it himself.

Use a firm voice. Emphasize the tone of your child's voice is often more important than what he says. So tell your child to speak in a strong tone of voice. No yelling or whispering. Be friendly but determined. Just tell the friend where you stand. A simple "No" or "No, I don't want to" is fine.

Reinforce assertiveness. If you want to raise a child who can stand up for his beliefs, then reinforce any and all efforts your child makes to be assertive and stand up for his beliefs. "I know that was tough telling your friends you had to leave early to make your curfew. I'm proud you were able to stand up to them and not just go along."

Hold family debates. The best way for kids to learn to express themselves is right at home, so why not start "Family Debates" or if you prefer the more gentler-sounding approach: "Family Meetings"? Start by setting these five rules: 1. Everyone is listened to. 2. No putdowns are allowed. 3. You may disagree, but do so respectfully. 4. Talk calmly. 5. Everyone gets a turn. Topics can be the hot button issues in the world, in school or right in your home. Here are just a few discussion possibilities: house rules, sibling conflicts, allowances, chores, curfews, parent-set movie restrictions. "Real world" issues could include: reparations, the Iraq War, the draft, lowering the voting age, legalizing drugs. Whatever the topic, encourage your hesitant child's to speak up and be heard.

Don't tolerate excuses. You've been working on these skills, but your child is still agreeing to do things she knows are wrong to go along with the group such as going to sneaking into a R-rated movie or using bad words. If this happens, be sure to take clear action to re-establish your rules and your child's need to stand up to peer pressure.

It's not always easy to buck the crowd. Everyone wants to be liked. But for your child's own self-confidence, independence and future success in life, it's important he learn to stand up to a friend. So continue to encourage each and effort he makes, and help him practice the skills of assertiveness until he can confidently use them alone. And above all, remember simple changes can reap big results. So don't give up.

Michele Borba, Ed.D. is an internationally renown educator, motivational speaker, who has presented keynotes and workshops to over one million parents and teachers on four continents, and is the recipient of the National Educator Award. Dr. Borba serves on honorary board to Parents magazine and has appeared as a guest expert on Today, The Early Show, The View, Fox & Friends, MSNBC, and NPR. She is the award-winning author of 20 books including Parents Do Make A Difference, No More Misbehavin', Building Moral Intelligence, Don't Give Me That Attitude! andNobody Likes Me, Everybody Hates Me (all Jossey-Bass). For more information about her work see http://www.micheleborba.com/.
BUILDING MORAL INTELLIGENCE at Home and in School

March 7, 2015 Saturday
Morning Session (for Parents) 8:00 - 12:30
Afternoon Session (for Educators) 1:30 - 5:30
University of Makati Main Theater

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
DR. MICHELE BORBA
Award-Winning Author, National Media Contributor, Character Development Expert, Education Consultant

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HOLY MASS
- Daily 12 noon Mass at the Chapel of the Holy Family.

RECOLLECTIONS
- 1st and 4th Sunday Recollection for Fathers (Holy Mass for the Families at 11 am)
- 3rd Thursday Recollection (with Benediction) at Molave Study Center

BASIC CATHOLIC DOCTRINE CLASSES
- Every Saturday, 10:15 – 11:00 am at the Academic Office Conference Room, 2nd floor Main Building (for fathers)
- Every 4th Sunday, 8:30—9:10 am (for Afternoon School fathers)
- Every 4th Sunday, 9:15 - 10:45 am (for Afternoon School mothers)

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION WITH SCHOOL CHAPLAIN
- By appointment

The Parents Formation Office welcomes personal write-ups about parenting principles and experiences. Please email them to mrinawat@southridge.ph