

Building Confidence and Values in Children

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Never before have children been targeted as they are now. Social media, advertising, and television's immoral idea of "cool" present a tremendous challenge for parents who want to instill real confidence in their children.

Here are several ways to help parents oversee the development of each of their children. Remember, your children are watching and listening. Their listening may seem little, yet, in reality, they are absorbing more than we know. Due to this fact, here are some guidelines for parents to keep in mind.

1. Encourage your child to think about what their thoughts are on any given topic. Take time to validate what is true without demeaning them for what may not be true. Elementary children are literal, black-and-white thinkers so validating them helps them know when they are on the right track. Gentle redirection of things not true creates an atmosphere where they trust the attitude or principle you are describing. As they move toward the pre-teen years, their ability to think abstractly develops and they become even more enjoyable to talk with.
2. Model expressing yourself without demeaning or judging yourself. This is a big one because children often learn from how we act more than what we say. Be resolute in this to show the child they can control their actions and respect themselves while respecting others. This is a hard one for many of us. 1 Corinthians 10 states that each one of us have been created and placed in the body as it pleased the Lord. Let me encourage you to honor how God has put you together and continue to grow. The better you and I become at honoring how we have been put together, the more we will be able to help children do the same.
3. Don't be afraid to point out the stereotypes in television shows and movies they may view. Once pointed out, the false messages about one's sexuality or degrading humor can lead to discussions about the distorted views of relating. Men and women alike are frequently and harshly attacked in television. The mistreatment of men and women is increasing, especially in the area of their sexuality. These messages need intervention so children of any age can learn the God-given preciousness of who they are.
4. Let your children know when you see their talents and abilities shining. Children of any age love to hear what they do well. The feedback creates a sense of specialness within their spirit. The child realizes they have a unique contribution to make. not only to the family but to others. You never know what kind of genius you are raising!
5. Focus on the process, or steps of progress, with your child. If you focus on the end result of an assignment or task, the focus is turned toward what you think, not what your child thinks. However, when focus is centered on the process, or ways in which

this time was better than the last, the child learns that their value is in the perseverance and not the product. Thus, you strengthen your child's character.

In the book of Deuteronomy, Moses talks about the commandments the Lord has given the children of Israel to follow. His profound words impress the reader. Moses says, "These commandments that I give to you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up" (NIV, 6:6-7).

Instilling confidence and values in your child is a continuous process. As the verses suggest, use each day as an opportunity to feed the spirit of your child with the truth of how God sees them. With the Lord's help, children will be raised to feel confident, expressing the values God revealed from His heart to the heart of His children.

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