

PARENTING TIPS

Practical Ways to Connect with Your Child's Heart

Connecting with a child is easier for some parents than others, and easier with some kids than others. Parents and kids have different personalities, likes, and dislikes. With some kids, connecting takes real creativity and persistence. Here are eleven suggestions to help you find ways to connect with your child's heart.

1. Talking. Children often like to hear stories from your own childhood. Don't feel like you have to tie a lesson into the story. Just tell it to them as if you were relating the details to a friend.
2. Listen to your kids. Take an interest in their activities and their day. Once they start talking, draw them out with more questions.
3. High-energy activities. Kids love excitement. Look for exciting activities to enjoy together.
4. Touching. A hug or a gentle hand on a shoulder communicates warmth and love.
5. Look for ways to share your child's interests.
6. Give occasional special treats.
7. Find a task and work at it together as teammates.
8. Offer genuine praise for a job well done.
9. Have fun with your kids. Be silly, tell jokes, or wrestle.
10. New times in a child's life set the stage to connect emotionally. Be there and available to share the moment.
11. Traumatic events provide opportunities to develop closeness. Remember that the most important thing isn't fixing the problem, it's restoring the heart.

In short, enjoy your kids and have fun with them. Take an interest in their lives. If you don't feel like it, do it anyway. Your kids need your playfulness, love, affection, and joy. When you give to your kids, you contribute to their well-being and your family's strength. Yes, it's sacrifice, but the time you put in now will go a long way toward reducing friction when it's time to confront or discipline.



This parenting tip is from the book; [Parenting is Heart Work](#) by Dr. Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, RN,
BSN