

## Ten Habits of Healthy Parenting



It is not necessary to be a perfect parent. We just need to be a "good enough" parent. As parents we all have days that we struggle with life's circumstances that affect our parenting. The important thing is that we are honest with our children when this occurs. We use those difficult days to help our children see how to label their emotions and work through frustration as we model appropriate behavior for them.

1. Children are valued for being who they are. They are cherished for their uniqueness. Talents and abilities are encouraged, whatever they may be.
2. Firm limits are set with appropriate choices. Limits are followed through with love and respect. The consequence of the child's behavior is tied as closely as possible to the natural consequence that would occur from the behavior.
3. Children are taught that their behavior impacts others in either a positive or negative way. They are held accountable for their actions and required to make restitution when necessary.
4. Parents are not afraid to share their imperfections with their children. When wrong, parents openly admit it and apologize, seeking forgiveness from their child.
5. All of the children's needs are met: physical, mental, emotional, developmental, medical, spiritual and basic life needs.
6. Children are responded to when expressing needs and wants. Needs and wants are not ignored. Children are taught to sort out a want versus a need.
7. Children are not expected to act in a way that is above their developmental level. They are accepted as they are developmentally, whether they are delayed or not.
8. Children are allowed to behave like children. They are not expected to behave as miniature adults. Parents recognize that circumstances can affect how a child behaves and helps their child to recognize these triggers that increase negative behavior. (i.e., being tired, hungry, sick)
9. Parents take time to really listen to their child, utilizing all their senses. When children talk to their parent, their parent takes time out from what they are doing to listen, making eye contact and getting down to their level.
10. Parents respect how their child feels and thinks. Feelings and thoughts are not dismissed but validated and valued. Children are not told "That doesn't hurt" or "You aren't that sad." They are allowed to feel their own feelings and ideas.