

# FAP Parent Tips

March 2009

## Seven Positive Parenting Tips



Even though we need a license to do many things in life—everything from driving and operating a forklift to practicing medicine and fishing—there is no license required to become a parent and this is often the trickiest of all of the above activities!

Parenting today is far more difficult than it was, even a generation ago. Many well-intentioned parents are using outdated and ineffective parenting styles. As a result, they experience daily frustration and stress in their home.

Below you will find seven tips for good parenting. These tips inspire children to want to be well behaved, can reduce family fights and boost family joy.

Positive Parenting Tip #1: If you love your kids, put yourself first! One of the best things we can do for our children is to give them a foundation for becoming a happy and healthy adult. Self-care should not be a luxury for parents—it needs to become a necessity. You need self-care both for being a good parent and a healthy and

balanced human being. Far too many children are living with parents who are stressed out and frankly, not at all fun to be around. If you are repeatedly burning the mid-night oil, you may be on the brink of parent burnout—not a pleasant thing for you or your family to experience.

Positive Parenting Tip #2: If you are married, put your marriage before your kids! Most of us have heard of Generation X and Generation Y. But did you realize that Generation S—Generation Spoiled—is on the rise? Many children today are raised with an unhealthy sense of entitlement because their parents have made them the center of the universe. With divorce statistics still hovering around 50%, children are far too often coping with unhappy, failing marriages and divorce—much worse for them than missing out on a couple of toys or brand name jeans. Take a stand and put some time into your marriage (like go on a date night) for your whole family's sake!

Positive Parenting Tip #3: Cherish your children. No matter what your situation—no matter how often your children drive you crazy—know there are thousands of people in this world who would gladly trade places with you. There are couples who would give anything to just have a child. Strive to remember how truly fortunate you are. Hug your children at least three times a day. Regularly tell them how grateful you are to have the opportunity to be their parent.

Positive Parenting Tip #4: Teach your kids to fish—don't fish for them! Many parents do everything for their kids. This only robs their children of the opportunity to learn self-reliance, which is vital to building their self-esteem. One of the best things you can do is to help

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FAP Parent Tips is a publication of the MWR FAP Office. For questions regarding the information in this newsletter, contact Shari Hutchinson, FAP Manager, by phone or email to [shari.hutchinson.ctr@dla.mil](mailto:shari.hutchinson.ctr@dla.mil).

your kids learn how to do things for themselves. One of the chapters of my first book on effective parenting is called “How To Get Your Kids Doing Their Chores Smiling”. Some parents think I am from another planet when I even suggest that kids can learn to do chores with a smile on their face. These same doubting parents are often happily surprised when they see it is possible—in their own home and in this century! Household chores teach basic life skills everyone needs to know. Also, chores give children the opportunity to contribute to the household in a positive and meaningful way.

Positive Parenting Tip #5: Focus on what you like, not on what you don't. If children aren't being appreciated and aren't getting attention for what they do well—and when they behave well—you better believe they will learn to get attention for not behaving well. The more you notice what you like about what they're doing, the less likely they are to morph into destructive little terrors and the more likely you will inspire your child to repeat the good behaviors and achievements you love.

Positive Parenting Tip #6: Give respect and expect it in return. Don't do anything to your child that

you wouldn't want your child to do to you. The list of things you don't want to be doing includes: yelling, hitting, spitting, and put downs. There are far better ways for you to handle conflict, stress and common misbehaviors. Commit to learning these “Ultimate Parenting” tools that are based on mutual respect, not fear based punishment that only teaches our kids to not get caught next time!

Positive Parenting Tip #7: A family that plays together stays together! Have fun—play with your kids. Laughing, tickling, and enjoying one another's company is the foundation of a happy home. Having fun can go a long way towards preventing much of the needless conflict and behaviors that drive you crazy. It also provides your family with much needed quality time.

These seven effective parenting tips above are child-proofed, effective and fun. By taking the time to learn how to bring out the best in you and in your children, you will reap the rewards that come from the peace of mind—knowing that you did all you could to support and nurture a happy and healthy family life.

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The Deployed Family Support Group is an organization established to support those who are in need of a place to talk with others in the same situation. The support group will meet on the third Tuesday of each month for a brown-bag discussion in building 21, conference room B223 from 12-1 p.m. The forum for the meetings will be formalized as the meetings begin and the group determines what will be most helpful. Speakers from other established organizations will be invited to address topics relating to deployments such as those remaining at home, handling situations that may arise, and homecomings. The meetings are a forum for seeking advice from experienced members and learning about local organizations specific to individual needs. There is strength in togetherness so come join us and let's take this journey together. See you there!

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The Family Advocacy Program (FAP) at DSCC is a DOD program dedicated to domestic violence prevention, spousal and child abuse prevention, education, prompt reporting, investigation, intervention and treatment. The program at DSCC provides a variety of services to DSCC, DFAS, tenant organizations, active duty and reserve military and their families to enhance their relationship and parenting skills and improve their quality of life. This mission is accomplished through a variety of groups, seminars, workshops, brief counseling and intervention services to include spousal and child abuse awareness, positive parenting, domestic violence, elder care, depression, grief/loss, couples communication skills, stress management, anger management, healthy communication, sexual assault awareness, and deployment assistance for military and civilians.

Because everyone faces problems and challenges in their lives, the FAP is dedicated to helping the DSCC community with those challenges. While these problems are usually resolved without assistance, they are sometimes too big or too complex to solve without help. Finding the right kind of help for complex situations is not an easy matter. Finding specialized, qualified counseling, how much it will cost, what to expect from counseling, and how to determine if the counselor is a good match for the client are typical concerns when seeking help.

If you are an active duty or retired service member or family member, the FAP Manager can help answer these questions, as well as provide free of charge consultation and referral service. If you are a civilian DOD employee, the program manager can answer your questions and refer you to the civilian Employee Assistance Program.

All services provided by the Family Advocacy Program on DSCC are free and confidential.