

Being a good parent

By Pinhas Mayer

While recognizing the irony of writing about good parenting at the age of 12, I think that it is important for parents to hear a growing child's perspective about parenting. I'm sure my own parents plan to show my children this essay in 20 years or so, so please do me a favor and destroy your copy when you're finished reading it!

- I think that kids would be more willing to do chores if there is a warning beforehand. If parents want a kid to do a job, they should hint or set a time in the near future when the job has to be done. For example; "Joe, the garbage is filling up" or "Fred, I need you to do the laundry in five minutes."
- I think that kids over the age of 11 should be allowed one and a half hours of Internet time per day, but less if all they do on the Internet is play games.
- Parents should help their kid set a schedule for every single day, including activity time, free time, homework time, etc'. This would give the kid a sense of responsibility and he/she would try to do everything on time.
- Have one day a week in which one of the parents takes the kid out for a bike ride, small trip or something else, so that the kid will feel that he/she also has fun with the parent once in a while.
- Once a week, one of the parents should sit down with the kid and hear all of the child's complaints, worries and demands. They should quietly write down everything the child says and then, together, try to find creative ways to solve the problems.
- A parent should not break up a fight or argument like this: "I don't care who started it, I want it stopped!" This gives a feeling of hopelessness to the wronged kid. Instead, the parent should try to find out who's right and who's wrong, and make sure that it doesn't happen again.
- The parents should insist on having dinner with the whole family at least once a week, because this gives the family a feeling of being together.
- Parents should deal out punishments only when really needed.
- Parents should listen to the kid's side of the argument before deciding what to answer- the parent might be very against something the child wants and not even listen to the child before deciding on the matter.
- Parents should work out a money system with the kid for different needs; for example, split most costs (barbecues, outings with friends...) half-half with the child.
- I think that a parent should try to find their kid a job (that is, if the kid is interested) to get the kid into the feel of making his/her own money.
- I think that kids should get an allowance, depending on the amount of chores they do and according to their age.
- I think that parents should not be sleeping when the kids get home unless it is very important that they get sleep. I believe that this has a negative effect on the kid- coming home to an empty house and then only seeing the parents in the evening.
- It is very important for parents to keep their promises.
- When possible, a kid should have his/her own room, as this would train him/her toward having & cleaning his/her own space.

In conclusion, I think that all of us, parents and children, should take a few minutes to reflect upon the way we treat each other. We should try to see if we treat each other with the appropriate respect and most effective approaches.