

# 20 Ways to Foster Values in Children

*"There are little eyes upon you and they're watching night and day.*

*There are little ears that quickly take in every word you say.*

*There are little hands all eager to do everything you do.*

*And a little child who's dreaming of the day he'll be like you."*

*-- Author unknown*

## What are values and why do we need them?

They are cherished beliefs and standards for right and wrong. They provide direction and meaning to life. Values inspire constructive behavior.

## What values do you consider most important?

The following is a starting place for creating your own list of values: compassion, generosity, helpfulness, wisdom, forgiveness, courtesy, punctuality, thriftiness, truthfulness, self-respect, obedience, patience, responsibility, dependability, cooperation, honesty, fairness, kindness, tolerance, humility, self-discipline, loyalty, courage, self-assurance, sportsmanship, gratitude, creativity, joyfulness, motivation, perseverance, faithfulness, knowledge, respectfulness...

## How can you instill values in your child?

1. Read and discuss stories that support your beliefs.
2. Monitor your child's media exposure that can undermine parental influence and the development of moral standards for behavior.
3. Share your approval when praiseworthy behavior is portrayed in the media and/or in real life, and discuss your displeasure when corrupt behavior is displayed.
4. Comment on your child's admirable conduct. For example, "Johnny, you were being dependable when you fed the dog without being reminded." "When you helped Mrs. Jones pick up sticks in her yard, you were doing a good deed and showing her you cared."
5. Name your own commendable actions. For example, "I was honest when I told the clerk she had given me too much change." "I recycle items because we need to do our part to protect the environment."
6. Be polite and considerate toward others.
7. Do what you say you will do.
8. Share your time, talents and possessions.
9. Set goals and complete difficult tasks.
10. Display warmth, support, encouragement, and consistency toward your child.
11. Set high but reasonable standards for your child's behavior.
12. Listen respectfully to your child's ideas and feelings.
13. Answer your child's questions.
14. Offer your child choices.
15. Take time to have fun with your child. For example, play games, read, pretend, look at family photos, share dreams, attend events, participate in sports or hobbies, or volunteer for worthy causes.

16. Agree on family rules and live by them. For example, the television is off during family meals; we are kind to each other; we do not use profanity.
17. Divide chores and work together on family projects.
18. Participate in religious activities and/or be faithful to religious or moral beliefs.
19. Consider how your family spends its time and money by asking yourself, "In my child's eyes, what does my family value most?"
20. Remember that your child will adopt the values you demonstrate daily.