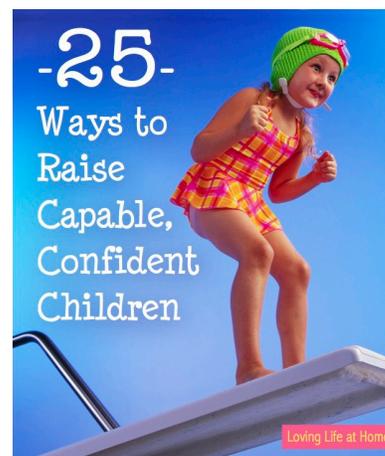


25 Ways to Raise Capable, Confident Children



1. **Pray without Ceasing:** Parenting requires wisdom from above, as well as strength, endurance, and consistency. Pray for yourself, but pray also for and with your children.
2. **Clearly Define the Rules:** Make sure your children know what you expect of them, and then oblige them to obey cheerfully and completely.
3. **Teach Them to Listen:** Everything in life comes more easily to a child who knows how to pay attention, so train your children to attend to your words.
4. **Bid Them Be Happy:** Cultivate contentment in your children, and you will all live happily ever after. Make certain your child's whining is never rewarded, and he will cease to do it.
5. **Nurture Your Marriage:** One of the most important things parents can do for their kids is to love one another, so be sure to invest in and safeguard your marriage.
6. **Show Them You Care:** "Children spell love T-I-M-E," so spend time with your kids, individually (use errands as an opportunity for one-on-one time) and as a group.
7. **Put Them to Work:** Assign household chores. Give them real and increasing responsibility from as young an age as possible and teach them to take pleasure in a job well done.
8. **Enjoy Them at Play:** Get excited about the things that excite your children, and regularly enter into their world of play. This is a great way to build memories, and will forever endear you to them if done consistently and enthusiastically.
9. **Encourage Them to Try New Things:** Expose your children to as broad a range of experience as you are able: music, sports, travel, missions, social and cultural events, etc.
10. **Point Them to Scripture:** Let the Word of God permeate every facet of family life. Read the Word of God to your children. Teach it to them diligently. Memorize it as a family.
11. **Protect Them from Harm:** Guard your kids against harmful influences or physical threats. As they grow older, discuss freely and frankly any potential hazards of which you are aware.
12. **Help Them Stay Healthy:** Work to establish good habits in the areas of diet, sleep, exercise, and hygiene. Feed your children square meals and preserve the family dinner hour.
13. **Give Them Good Manners:** Common courtesy and respect are no longer as common as they ought to be. Teach your children to say "please," "thank you," and "you're welcome."
14. **Read Them Great Books:** Kids are never too old to be read to, so choose well and discuss at length. Sharing books together is the surest way to foster a lifetime love for reading.
15. **Equip Them to Lead:** Stress the importance of integrity, humility, and self-discipline. Model servant leadership and challenge them to follow Christ's example, who came not to be served, but to serve.
16. **Treat Them with Understanding:** Kids are people, too! Be patient with your children and treat them with kindness. Try to remember what it was like to be in their shoes.
17. **Turn Off the TV:** Set reasonable limits on screen time of any sort, including but not limited to television, computers, smart phones, tablets, and video games.
18. **Inspire Good Sportsmanship:** Teach them to lose with grace and to win with humility, conscious that their natural talents and abilities are gifts from above. Stress the importance of playing fairly. "It's not whether you win or lose, but how you play the game."
19. **Lead Them by Example:** Model for your children the character and behavior you wish them to exhibit, but don't pretend to be perfect (or expect your kids to be). Be honest about personal flaws and quick to apologize and seek forgiveness if you wrong them.
20. **Train Them to Think:** Education is more than regurgitating facts; our kids must also learn to reason and to think through things on their own. Anticipate, encourage, and answer their questions in an intellectually honest, scientifically accurate, non-defensive way.
21. **Grant Them Some Space:** Allow your children to make their own decisions whenever possible, and be supportive of their choices. You can offer your kids guidance and encouragement without smothering and micromanaging them.
22. **Bless Your Children:** Let your sons and daughters know that you are proud of them. Don't get so focused on correcting your children when they do wrong that you forget to praise them when they do right. Kids never outgrow the need for parental approval.
23. **Don't Overreact:** Whether your toddler breaks a leg or your teen bombs a test, swallow your fears. We all have mishaps, and we all make mistakes. Don't be negligent and reckless, but don't be hovering and over-protective either.
24. **Entrust Them to God:** Instill in your children a clear vision of what they can accomplish for God's glory. Do your best to give them an eternal perspective. Pass them the baton. Our kids are in His hands: only by His grace do any of our efforts succeed.
25. **Let Them Grow Up:** Our ultimate goal is not to raise oversized children, but to raise mature, responsible adults. It is a gradual process, like the letting out of kite string. Don't be too clingy -- spool out the thread smoothly and steadily as needed.