Tips for Parents

Help Wanted: Parents (Male and Female to work double and triple shifts)

Applicants must have unlimited physical and emotional stamina. Long term commitment. No pay. No weekends or holidays off but high potential for satisfaction.

A humorous description for a sometimes difficult reality... Parenting is One Tough Job!

Here are tips that can help you through the challenges of raising children.

New Moms and Dads

- Know that babies cry a lot so learn what soothes your baby. Try not to blame yourself or be angry with your baby if you are unable to calm them. Learning what works will take a little patience and practice.
- Never ever shake a baby! If you feel like you are getting upset, place your baby in a safe place and walk away for a few minutes.
- Ask for help. Caring for a newborn can be exhausting and it’s normal to need help.
- Learn as much as possible about early brain development and how you can enhance your baby’s learning.
- Plan Ahead. Keep a list of phone numbers you may need such as your pediatrician, hospital emergency department, a relative, supportive friends, or a breast feeding consultant.
- Hold your baby as often as you want. Don’t worry about friends and family who say you will “spoil” the baby. You are meeting the baby’s needs.
- Establish a bedtime routine such as bath, book, breast or bottle, and bed. Your baby will soon learn where this sequence of events is leading and will be prepared for sleep.
- Always place your baby on their back to sleep. The sleeping ABC’s, “Alone, on their Back, in a Crib” has been proven to reduce the chance of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.
- When your baby takes a nap... use that time to get some rest yourself.
- Find a way to talk with other new parents. Join a support group or find an online blog to read and write.
- What your baby needs most is you and your love!
Tips for Parents

Communication

- Make sure to smile, touch, and make eye contact with your child everyday in a positive and loving way.
- Set aside at least one night per week for family dinner. Encourage everyone to talk.
- Start when your child is young letting them know that you are willing to listen to whatever they have to say, even if you don’t always agree.
- Teach your child early to identify their feelings so that they can tell you and other adults what they feel inside.
- Ask questions that must be answered with more than a yes or no.
- Listen, Listen, Listen – Ask permission to give advice. Sometimes our children only want to vent, they don’t want us to solve every problem.
- Read to your child, or have them read to you no matter how old they are, then talk about the story, both the positive and the negative parts.
- Learn how to speak your child’s language even if that means learning how to email, send texts, and use social media.
- Be respectful to your child in front of his or her friends, and talk with your children’s friends when they are around.

Tips for Teens

- It’s normal for teenagers to question values and rules. When setting or enforcing rules, make sure each rule is reasonable and clear. Give risk and consequence of breaking those rules and be clear on exactly what is not allowed.
- Teenagers may sleep late on weekends and during school breaks. Most young people need more sleep during this stage and lack of sleep may result in moodiness.
- If your teenager is flooded with emotion, acknowledge their rage “I can see you are angry” and walk away. If you really want them to talk to you, sit down at a later time and really listen to what they have to say.
- When you hear, “I’m the only one who has to…” check out the rules with other parents. You aren’t the meanest parent in the world!
- Try to listen calmly even when there is a difference in opinion. Concentrate on hearing and understanding your teen’s point of view. Don’t start lecturing when a give and take discussion is necessary.

1-800-CHILDREN

Parenting is tough even in the best circumstances and sometimes it takes extra resources and support! The 1-800-CHILDREN Helpline is a free, statewide, information and referral service. It’s a voice on the other end of the line that can empathize and offer support to help you with simple questions or complex situations. It is designed to help parents and caregivers find resources in their community to help with any need related to raising children.

1-800-CHILDREN

Toll-Free - Open Mon.– Fri., 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. - Staffed by bilingual professionals - Safe place to discuss options

Acknowledgements:
Prevent Child Abuse Henry County – Talking to Your Teen
Prevention Child Abuse Illinois – Tips for New Moms and Dads