

## Parent words and actions



Being a parent can be the most rewarding experience in life, but as many parents know, raising a child is not always easy. As human beings, we can't always control events in our life or how we feel, but as adults and parents, we must always be in control of how we treat children. The following are tips and guidelines parents can use to develop their own positive approach to parenting.

### ***\*As a parent I promise to...***

- ♥ Show my children daily that I love them by what I say and do.
- ♥ At least once a day praise something about my children; be wary of excessive criticism.
- ♥ Give my children freedom and privacy and teach them the proper use of both.
- ♥ Keep my house suitable for children's activities and a welcome place for their friends.
- ♥ Read a book, go on a picnic and/or visit friends with my child.
- ♥ Be extra careful before I speak when I am tired.
- ♥ Recognize and respect my children's individualism and do not expect to be the same as I am.
- ♥ Keep promises I make to my children and teach them to be dependable.

**Words that help**...a child with self-esteem will have the confidence to succeed. Use words that give him or her encouragement, such as:

- ♥ I/We love you.
- ♥ Good job.
- ♥ I am/We are so proud of you.
- ♥ We can do it together.
- ♥ Thanks for your help.
- ♥ What did you like best about today?

**Words that hurt**...words can make a child feel worthless, ugly and unloved. Children believe what their parents tell them, and can be hurt by such phrases as:

- ↯ Stupid! You never do anything right.
- ↯ You are more trouble than you are worth.
- ↯ I am sick of you! Why don't you find another place to live?
- ↯ You are so lazy - you will never amount to anything.
- ↯ Why can't you be as smart as your brother? He always gets A's.

### **Actions that help**



- ♥ Make sure that your children know they can always come to you when they feel confused, afraid or threatened.
- ♥ Keep the line of communication open and take time to LISTEN to your children.
- ♥ Believe a child who tells you about sexual abuse. Tell the child you know it is not their fault. Promise to get help.
- ♥ Tell your children that if they are abused or someone threatens to abuse them to tell someone about it. Abusers say a child's threat to tell someone about abuse is the best way to keep abuse from happening.

**Child abuse or neglect includes:**

- ↗ Physical abuse or neglect.
- ↗ Emotional abuse (words that hurt) or neglect.
- ↗ Leaving a child unsupervised.
- ↗ Sexual abuse.
- ↗ Abandonment.
- ↗ Educational neglect.

**Preventing child abuse is everyone's responsibility.** Get involved. Many crimes against children can be prevented if each of us takes the time to learn how to be a good neighbor. A good neighbor gets involved with area families in a caring way. Introduce yourself and be willing to offer your help to your neighbors, friends and relatives who may be experiencing serious stress. Listen to parents talk about their problems. You might offer to take children for an hour or two while their parents handle an immediate crisis. Suggest a self-help or parent support group.

**To report child abuse,** call the government agency in charge of child protective services in your county. Look in the yellow pages under "*domestic abuse information and treatment centers,*" *human service organizations,*" or *social service organizations.*"

**To get help regarding your own parenting or family issues,** refer to the "*information*" pages of your local phone directory under the heading of "*community services,*" "*hotline,*" "*help line,*" and "*crisis line*" numbers.



*Your donation helps provide needed programs.*

**Child Abuse Prevention Fund**  
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\*Information submitted by Metropolitan Missionary Baptist Church, Rev. Willie D. Wanzo, Sr., author unknown.

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