

Top parenting ideas for 2014

✖ Resolve to raise self-esteem, foster a sense of security, and encourage independence in your children in the new year. Here are our top parenting ideas for this year:

1-Read aloud to your children, even if they already know how to read to themselves.

2-Get rid of the smart phones at the dinner/lunch/breakfast table and turn off the TV. Focus on food and family instead.

3-Compliment your child's effort – from using the potty, to dressing himself, to not fighting with a sibling. Praise the effort, not the outcome.

4-Teach a new skill such as how to fold socks, how to cook eggs, how to put a book back neatly in a bookshelf, how to do his algebra correctly.

5-Have your child do something he's never done to encourage independence. For example, have your 6 year old order for himself at a restaurant, have your 9 year old call and arrange his own get-together with a friend before you get on the phone with the parent, or have your tween call (on the phone, not “googling”) a store to find out what time it opens.

6-Tell a personal anecdote in order to teach a lesson. For a young child, tell them how: “I remember when I forgot to wear my gloves and my hands were SOOO cold...”

7-Listen to your child when he talks to you. Put down the phone, put down the newspaper, turn off the TV, put aside the mail, and really pay attention.

8-Make your child laugh daily. Tell a corny joke, make a funny face, read a funny book, play a funny game, whatever

it takes.

9-Tuck your child into bed or at least visit your teen's room before he goes to sleep. Bedtime brings out stories from your children you might not hear about during the day. And it shows you care about them.

10-Hug them. Even if they are now bigger than you are. Remind your child that you will always be there for him.

Wishing you all a happy and healthy 2014,

Julie Kardos, MD and Naline Lai, MD

©2014 Two Peds in a Pod®