

TEN WAYS MOTHERS CAN SET THE EXAMPLE FOR THEIR CHILDREN

Editors remarks: This is Mother's Day weekend and we salute all those who proudly carry the title "Mum". We live in a world where parenting is not getting any easier with the complexity of modern life providing ever increasing challenges for all Mum's and Dad's. Whilst this article is written primarily for Mothers, Fathers should also be able to glean some idea's that will support them in their role as well. We hope you enjoy it as our Feature Article this month to mark "Mother's Day".

By Rebecca Hagelin (HowToSaveYourFamily.com)

Each week I hear from new mums who know something is amiss in the culture, instinctively know they need to change how they are parenting, but aren't quite sure where to start. So what is the best way to begin? By living out the principles, behaviour and values you want your children to develop.

So as I salute you in your efforts to truly mother your kids, here are ten simple ways how you can set the example for your children starting right now:

1. Always model honesty and truth. There is no difference between a "little white lie" and a "big fat lie" and our kids know it. If you are even a "tad bit" dishonest in your speech or actions you are modelling complete dishonesty. And for goodness sake, don't ever, ever ask your children to lie for you. When you instruct your kids to tell callers that you aren't home when you really are, you are damaging the development of their consciences, and asking them to sin on your behalf. Don't do it.
2. Speak up when you see or hear something wrong. Don't assume that kids will understand that something is wrong. When you encounter material or situations that offend your values, let your child know how you feel and why. Always remember that to your child, your silence is an endorsement of the behaviour at hand.
3. Let your kids see you reading good material. Children and teens notice what their parents read. Stay away from the trashy "women's magazines". Go through your home right now and throw the junk away, and cancel your subscriptions. Replace it with materials that actually reflect your values, and make it a point to let your kids see you reading them.
4. Show good sportsmanship. Teach your kids how to win and how to lose. A good winner doesn't gloat, and a good loser doesn't throw a fit, but is gracious and congratulates the winner. These rules also apply to academic and other contests.
5. Be a good listener. If you're always lecturing instead of listening, chances are your kids will avoid having conversations with you. Ask questions, avoid immediate negative reactions, and be available to them when they want to talk.
6. When you make a mistake, apologize. There's nothing wrong with saying, "Honey, I'm sorry I lost my temper like that." That itself sets a good example, reminding them that they shouldn't let pride interfere with doing what's right. And, if you've made a dumb mistake, your kids already know about it anyway. Avoiding the reality of your temporary lapse in judgment doesn't make the incident disappear - it only makes the memory of it hurt more.

7. Don't whine! Be bold and vocal about what is wrong, and then work to change it if you can. But never whine and complain around your kids. If you do, you'll get whining in return. And they will grow up viewing their own mum as something other than strong and positive.
8. Learn to forgive, and forget. Nothing will destroy a human being faster than bitterness. Your children will be harmed by many people in their lives, and how they learn to deal with it depends largely on you. Don't bring up their own past mistakes if they have already been dealt with. Move forward in love.
9. Mind your manners. Consistently bad behaviour in public reveals what is permitted at home. Always practice kindness and thoughtfulness in your own family.
10. Be generous. Show your kids that you don't wait for the government to tax you to help others. Give freely of your blessings, with your money, time, kindness and by displaying a cheerful spirit.

As you prepare to be celebrated as a mum this weekend, make it your pledge to practice that calling more deliberately than you ever have before. There's no more important job in the entire world, and doing it well starts with being the person God calls you to be.

Source: Rebecca Hagelin