

PROPOSED BY
JESSICA ANDER BERG

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SMART PARENTING:



A COMPLETE GUIDE FOR BUSY PARENTS



Abstract

Being a parent is one of the most rewarding experiences in life, but it also comes with its challenges, especially for busy moms and dads who are trying to balance work, family, and personal responsibilities. Juggling these demands can be overwhelming and stressful, leaving little time for parents to focus on the well-being of their children. Fortunately, there are ways to manage time effectively and reduce stress while still providing the attention and care that children need.



In this pdf, we'll explore some of the best parenting advices and tips that busy moms and dads can use to find balance and create a happy, healthy home environment. From setting priorities to practicing positive communication, these tips can help parents navigate the challenges of parenting while also taking care of themselves. By implementing these strategies, parents can create a fulfilling family life and cherish the joys of parenthood.

Getting Started

I. Smart Parenting Is The Need Of The Hour

Most of us undoubtedly believe that god gives parents the motivation to raise their children. After all, they are the parents. But I think, sometimes it is great to think outside the box. We should start parenting the other way round i.e. practice smart parenting, to really work out on generation gap which is a great concern now a days.



Because of excessive stress levels faced by Parents and child alike, a gap inevitably gets created between them. Let us celebrate Parenting - a divine task by changing our mindset and applying it in such a way that helps our children enjoy and cherish their growing years. For achieving this objective smart parenting is required.

When our children are very young, we always take care of them like an umbrella. All their activities are so sweet and enjoyable for all of us. That twinkling smile, demanding cry, and that act of beating the box; all are so adorable. We enjoy everything giving a feeling for the child that we are here for you always.

But when the child steps further and reaches to his/her teenage or adolescent time, we suddenly become so protective and start to behave more as a guard than parent.

Why so? Here in this stage of a child whom he/she needs more and more support, care and mutual trust, we are doing just the opposite! How strange!. Here We 're totally away from smart parenting

Children enjoy some of their greatest joys of life as teens and we the parents should have deeper understanding of each other sharing their feeling, dreams, desires and even fears. Let us go some further if needed! We should try to be their best friends by adopting smart parenting.

Sensitivity and openness is the key here to unlock the mind of any child. We frequently hear children saying-"parents need to listen to us. They should participate and realize things from our point of view." Exactly! parents should 'share' rather than to 'poke'. This sharing will give them a lot of perspective and confidence to move forward with golden boots.

This is the reason, now-a-days the cases of suicide have increased drastically. Every morning, we hear news of suicide in newspapers. Other than suicide, cases of drug addiction, habit of drinking have also increased among the teenagers. Come on parents, wake up! Let's go for smart parenting.

Here, I want to share that we the parents are to be blamed for this. Yes! Looks shocking! But it is true. Our ambitions are getting priority than our child whom we have given birth. Just think, the time you spent in office is almost 10 to 15 hours a day but every day can you give 10 to 15 minutes solely to your child? I am sure that most of the parents especially fathers cannot say 'yes' to this. Because of all of this, The child feels like that 12th player in a team who is there in the match, helping others but no prize for him. Do you think it is ok?

Here are some smart parenting steps you can take to avoid all this:

1. Let us start from the morning, have a family walk instead of morning walk at least for 15 minutes
2. At least 3 days in a week you drop them in the school instead of bus.
3. One of you go to school to pick them up so that they feel happy that somebody is waiting for them.
4. In the evening, when they study, just sit beside to motivate them for study.
5. Before going to sleep or in the dinner table, ask them about their day, how they spent, what happened, what they liked and what not.

Swamy Vivekananda quoted "We have air everywhere on earth but still we need a fan to feel it". You can be a parent at some time in your life but to be a parent in your true sense, act like that fan! and there lies the main treasure of being called, "my great mom and dad ".

II. What Is Considered Smart Parenting?



Parenting is one of the complicated milestones in life. They would do anything for their family and while it may seem like it's all come together, life just becomes a paradox. Luckily, there are smart parenting tips to self-improve

and advice when parenting becomes a puzzle. Smart parenting is important as it also an awareness of modern parenting styles.

✚ **How Smart Parenting Helps**

As parents, you need to be smart when teaching your kids the essence of life. And while modern parenting has made emotions and mental health more acknowledged than before, smart parenting goes beyond your traditional parenting methods.

Not only does this help with your kid's decision-making, independent skills, and social and emotional growth, but also helps you, the parent, in being more informed about other approaches to raising children.

✚ **Why Smart Parenting Is Important to Know**



To Be Their Best Friend

As a family, they should turn to you when they need a shoulder to cry on. Or, days when they feel vulnerable, they could vent their emotions to you. You are

not just parents, but you are also your child's first best friend. Playing, doing activities, and bonding, are all ways to incorporate a healthy relationship with your kids.

Be their best friend right from the start as this also creates closeness and the feeling of being able to joke around during less serious moments.

As a Parent, Learn to Raise Confident Kids

Smart parenting when done right allows parents to let their kids do their own thing. It allows them to know their own strength. Because of that, they are more likely to be confident.

Know Your Child and Their Potential

Another positive note to smart parenting is once closeness happens frequently between you and your child, you get to know more about their talents, hobbies, and what other potential they possess. After all, each child or individual is unique. With smart parenting, you not only create a positive environment but also an environment they can learn more about themselves and you.

Tips to Smart Parenting

Here are other tips on your approach to smart parenting:

Let Them Learn to Own Their Own

Most parents would often intervene during times they see their kids struggling with puzzles or activities they are doing, however, persistent actions may lead to kids not being able to do or think for themselves.

Let them learn to finish the puzzle first or ask them questions that can make them think of another way to do it or a different perspective.

For instance, "would it fit if we did it sideways?", or "you're doing great, but what if we look for another puzzle piece."

Talk to Them Openly

Kids are known to be honest at their age. While it may seem true, as parents, you should be the safe haven for your child's emotions. When you feel a tantrum is about to happen or when they get overstimulated and have an outburst, let them cry and talk to them.

Ask them how they are feeling, what makes them feel that way, let them talk to you openly about their feelings. If not, let them cry it out and tell them that you will be there until they start feeling better. Another note, during lunch or family dinner, ask them how their day was at school or what they didn't like about today.

An important thing to remember is never force your kids to talk to you. Let them talk to you openly. Let them know that you respect their emotions and when the time is right, they can talk to you about it.

Let Them Learn About Boundaries

Boundaries are important in smart parenting. Talk to them about the different types of boundaries like emotional, physical, and personal space. This teaches them self-respect and consent. In that way, they can also learn to respect other kids or people's personal boundaries. Since we are in the digital age, social media or the internet is another risk to boundaries. Teach them online privacy such as not sharing too much personal matters online, privacy settings, and how to handle online conversations.

Spending Time Is Crucial

Whether you're busy as a stay-at-home parent or working at outside, allot time for your kids. Showing up to their recitals, school affairs, sports, or family day can affect their confidence a whole lot. And kids will remember this even when they grow up. So if you're really busy, schedule in advance your plans for the weekend, learn to say no to office work when things are getting overloaded, don't neglect the time you have for your kids. After all, the time wasted can never be refunded.

More Outside Activities

Technology has made online game and activities more accessible. But that doesn't mean it replaces the real outdoor activities. Make sure to limit screen time to 30 minutes starting at a young age. Plan trips like hiking, road trip, beach trips, or traveling. It may seem difficult the first time, but researching and asking for advice when traveling with kids the first time is very helpful. Outdoor activities are experiences your kids will never forget. Besides that, they also learn a lot of new things.

Encourage Risks

While no parent likes to see their kids fail, it's important to teach them about taking risks and to accept defeat. No one was made perfect, and by teaching that, kids will be more confident to take risks and encouraged to try again.

Don't pressure them to get it right the first time, however, encourage them to do their best and practice honing their skills everyday.

Accept Their Temperaments

As mentioned, each child is unique. As they grow up, they may get "big feelings" which may cause them to feel unsure of what they feel and overstimulated, be present. Let them feel these temperaments and teach them to handle it positively. Give them their personal space and let them vent their emotions.

Remember, how you react when they make mistakes, when they cry, and when they're angry, will reflect how they will handle their emotions. This will affect them later as adults.

Show Them Self-Care Matters

"Wear your oxygen mask first." No parent can be engaged all the time. So rest, exercise, eat good food, go and take care of yourself. At a younger age, kids tend to copy what they see their parental figures are doing. So showing how you take care of yourself can also affect the way they care for themselves.

Make Them Do the Chores

Another way to teach them independence is to make them do chores. It's best to encourage them to join you when cooking, cleaning, or doing errands. Don't force them to help nor get mad when they try and make a mess. Handle it positively when they make a mess by not scolding or shouting at once, instead, remain calm and initiate them to clean the mess together. Another way is to make doing chores more fun by turning on some music or giving them a reward after like an ice cream or a trip to the mall.

Start Teaching Them How to Handle Their Money

Investments like your house and lot in Cavite, are just other things to be teaching your kids. As young as now, teaching them the value of money will make them sure every penny counts. Simple as saving their money in the piggy bank, or just explaining how money works, will make them handle their money wisely.

III. 10 Questions Smart Parents Ask Themselves.



1. Am I coddling my child or allowing them to learn?

All parents want what is best for their child however the best in this case often turns out to be a protected, sheltered life without learning any useful life-

skills. Smart parents understand that the best path for a child is to face challenges, learn how to tackle them and understand how to learn from failure.

2. Am I focused on building a strong relationship with my child or making them obey me?

Just because your child is obedient does not mean you have discovered the golden rules of parenting. It merely means your child is obedient, nothing more. What success parents focus on is building a relationship with their kids. That makes the difference in the long run.

3. Do I force my kids to do things?

There is a difference between making a commitment to do certain things and being forced to do it. Smart parents understand that you cannot force kids to do stuff. Outstanding children achieve success by making a commitment to excel. This is the reason why smart parents allow their children to make their own choices and take responsibility for the outcome. By doing so, you will raise emotionally healthy adults who know how to cope with anything life throws at them.

4. Do I focus on what my child is doing or what she is becoming?

As smart parents, we should focus more on what the child is becoming. Knowing and doing can be temporary. Children need to know how to attract permanent success. For example, any student can pour in 100 per cent effort and ace an exam. It will take successful habits and consistency to ace every exam and emerge as the top student. Temporary success is determined by what you know and how you do it in the moment. Permanent success is determined by who you are as a person.

5. Do I display the behaviour I want my child to exhibit?

Average parents tell their kids what to do, smart parents show their kids what to do. Smart parents know it is more impactful to set an example for their children and let them learn watching how their parents talk, walk and behave. That is being a role model for their children.

6. Do I think my children's success is also my success?

It is far too often that parents impose their idea of success on their children. Somewhere along the line, they start measuring their own success by the success achieved by their children. This can be extremely unhealthy for both the kids and the parents. It is difficult to measure success and harder to define it. Smart parent set their own definition of success and allow their children to define their own.

7. Do I teach with love?

Remember how you used to cajole and explain things to your kids whenever they made a mistake? That changes fast as they grow up and mistakes are responded to with annoyance and strict discipline. This makes the child feel that they have disappointed their parents and they do not love them at that moment. It is important to show our kids our love for them is constant and unconditional. This is why smart parents end talks with love.

8. Do I praise them enough? Do I support them fully?

While making sure we teach our children what is necessary, often we miss out on expressing our love or praising them. Many students I have spoken to have said that they feel worthy of praise only when they achieve something; because only that is when parents praise them. Children need to know that as parents we support them and love them fully.

9. Do I handle situations well?

Children have a tendency to become the people others view them as. So if you view them as naughty children, they will turn to mischief. If you view them as good kids, they will ensure they are well behaved. This is an important point to remember whenever we are reacting to any mischief done by our kids. Average parents react with negative comments and punishment. Smart parents respond by reaffirming that their kids are good but express surprise at what they have done. When kids see that their parents view them as good people, they strive to live up to that belief.

10. If I was in my child's shoes, what would I think of my parenting style?

Every parent continues to think they are the best parent in the world until they start looking from the perspective of their kids. This helps you become more aware of the things you should be doing, the things you should stop doing and any misconceptions your child might have about your style of parenting. For example, one common misconception children have is that we discipline them out of anger. Understanding that kids think like this enables us to show them that, as parents, we discipline out of love not anger or hate.

You must have noticed already, that, every question is focused on removing your wants and needs from being projected on your kids to extracting what they desire out of their lives. Once you start asking these questions, you will truly start to see them grow up as capable, bright and emotionally healthy individuals.

IV. Ways To Become Smart Parents

Here are 10 parenting tips that will help you in becoming a smart parent



1. Take care of yourself first
2. Be the mother or father you want to be for your kids

3. Set boundaries for family members
4. Create a healthy relationship with your partner
5. Communicate well with your kids
6. Practice self-care
7. Have lots of patience
8. Remember that parenting is for life
9. Have a sense of humour!
10. Keep cool under pressure

Parenting isn't perfect. There will be times when it feels like your child is testing your patience, but having a positive sense could help make good parenting much more accessible. Follow the parenting tips mentioned above and be a smart parent.

V. Smart Parenting Tips For Busy Moms And Dads

By implementing these strategies, parents can create a fulfilling family life and cherish the joys of parenthood.



❖ **Set Priorities**

As a working parent, it can be challenging to balance the demands of work and family life. One of the most important smart parenting tips for working parents is to set priorities. This involves identifying the most important tasks that need to be accomplished each day and focusing on those first. By setting priorities, working parents can ensure that the most critical responsibilities are addressed first, reducing stress and avoiding last-minute scrambling. This may mean that some less important tasks are put on hold, but it's crucial to remember that quality time with children is a top priority.

Setting priorities can also help working parents manage their time more efficiently, enabling them to make the most of the time they do have with their children. By making a conscious effort to prioritize family time, working parents can create a happy and healthy home environment, even when faced with competing demands on their time.

❖ **Make a Schedule**

Making a schedule is a crucial parenting tip for working moms and dads who want to balance the demands of work and family life effectively. Creating a schedule that includes time for work, family activities, and relaxation can help working parents manage their time more efficiently, reducing stress and ensuring that they have enough quality time with their children.

When making a schedule, it's essential to be realistic about the time available for each activity, and to prioritize family time. This may mean that working parents need to say no to some social events or activities that don't fit into their schedule, but it's important to remember that spending quality time with children is a top priority. A schedule can also help working parents stay organized and focused, reducing the likelihood of last-minute scrambling or forgotten appointments.

Keeping your home neat with kids is also very challenging when you are a busy parent with work commitments. Therefore, prioritise tidiness over organisation and take quick steps to spruce your home without spending hours.

However, if you don't know how to start, here is your complete guide outlining cleaning hacks for busy parents. Use them to spruce your home quickly even on days when cleaning is challenging! These tips will help you divide your time in a way that you can manage sanitation effectively.



- **Create A Simple Cleaning Caddy**

You must have necessary cleaning supplies on hand to remove stains and take care of messes immediately after they happen. The best way to do so is by creating a simple cleaning caddy. It should have the following basic, but important things.

- ✓ An all-purpose cleaner
- ✓ A gentle disinfectant
- ✓ Hydrogen peroxide
- ✓ Microfibre cloths and towels
- ✓ Paper towels and cleaning wipes

If you are into natural cleaning, substitute commercial cleaners with white vinegar, baking soda and other eco-friendly cleaning products. You can easily make different solutions and poultices for sanitising different surfaces and fixtures in your home. It is vital to use organic solutions when you have toddlers at home who touch the floor often and then put their fingers in the

mouth. These natural cleaners are not harmful to humans or the environment and have the capability to clean effectively.

- **Pick Up Clutter**

A home with kids can accumulate a lot of clutter due to toys, clothes, footwear and other belongings. If you want to make your home look organised and put-together, start by picking up things that don't belong in the living room, kitchen or bedrooms. Next, declutter the bathroom and play area. Do this activity before going to bed to wake up to a neat and tidy house.

If you choose to hire a daily or weekly house cleaning service, doing this before the cleaners come speeds up the process. However, when you are too busy, ask the cleaners to pick up clutter as well. Professional service providers customise the cleaning according to your needs and charge accordingly. So, hiring a reputed team can help you lower your cleaning burden.

- **Get Storage Containers For Every Room**

When you have kids, it can seem like things are always on the floor, furniture or other places where they create messes. To avoid this situation, get storage containers in fun designs and colours to keep things organised. They not only help you store and find things easily but also improve the appeal of the room.

For example, get a stylish laundry hamper, toy box, book cases and storage containers to keep your or your kids things in an organised manner. You can keep the containers on the floor and stack them or choose to get containers that can be nailed or fixed to a wall. You can also make your child learn to put the toys back in the containers as a part of their playtime by making it a fun activity.

- **Prioritise And Time Your Cleaning Chores**

Often busy parents only get 15-20 minutes in a day to clean up. If you are among them, then it is vital to prioritise your tasks according to urgency and importance. You cannot keep dirty dishes overnight because they contain dangerous microorganisms.

Additionally, sweeping and mopping floors is necessary as well. To know which tasks, you must complete and prioritise daily, evaluate your entire home and make a house cleaning checklist. It will help you schedule your cleaning effectively and keep the house clean.



- **Perform One Task At A Time**

Instead of wasting time, energy and products restarting cleaning tasks in every room, make your house cleaning process smooth and efficient. Perform one task in the entire house before moving on to another task. Thus, if you are dusting, dust all the common and reachable surfaces before vacuuming the furniture, curtains or floors. Focus on the job and you will be able to finish it quickly.

- **Wipe The Kitchen Splatter Zone Daily**

At the end of each day, give your kitchen splatter zone a thorough clean. This zone is the area where your stove is, meaning the cooking range, countertop below it, the wall behind the stove and the cabinets above. Take a damp cloth or cleaning wipes (without alcohol ones) and clean the stove and the surrounding area making an S pattern to prevent backtracking. It will help to make the cooking zone hygienic and sanitised.

- **Whip A Natural Sanitiser For Cleaning Any Surface In Your Home**

Want a cleaner that can remove spots, smudges, stains and germs instantly? In a spray bottle mix water with rubbing alcohol. Add a few drops of dishwashing liquid to this solution and use it to clean marble countertops, electronics, hard surfaces, floors and almost any other area.

- **Take Out The Trash Daily**

A house with kids can have a ton of trash every day, including organic waste, plastics, dust, leftover food, expired goods and more. Therefore, take out the trash daily if you want your home to remain garbage-free. Ensure everyone recognises waste and puts it in the trash to make this task easier and manageable.

- **Keep Cleaning Wipes Handy**

You can buy commercial cleaning wipes or make some at home as per preference. They will be handy when you want to sanitise a specific area, high touch points, stains or spots made by kids and other messes.

Cleaning wipes are also necessary when you are end-of-lease cleaning in Sunshine Coast, especially when you need disposable tools. End of lease cleaning in Perth is an important task as it a tenants responsibility to keep and leave rental property reasonably clean.

- ❖ **Learn to Say No**

For working parents, learning to say no is a smart parenting tip that can help reduce stress and ensure that they have enough quality time with their children. With busy work schedules and other responsibilities, it can be tempting to say yes to everything, but overcommitting can lead to burnout and leave little time for family activities. By saying no to extra activities or social events, working parents can prioritize family time and reduce the likelihood of feeling overwhelmed. This may mean missing out on some events, but it's crucial to remember that quality time with children is a top priority.

Learning to say no can also teach children about boundaries and the importance of prioritizing responsibilities. It's important to communicate with colleagues, friends, and family members about the need to prioritize family time and to be clear about what activities are feasible given the time constraints.

❖ **Be Present**

Being present is an essential piece of advice for parenting for working parents. With busy work schedules and other responsibilities, it can be easy to get caught up in distractions and to be physically present but mentally absent when spending time with children. To be present, working parents need to set aside distractions and focus on the present moment when interacting with their children. This means putting away phones or other devices and actively engaging with children during activities.

Being present can help parents build stronger connections with their children, improve communication, and promote a healthy family dynamic. It's important to remember that quality time with children is a top priority, and being present during that time can help working parents feel more fulfilled and satisfied.

❖ **Practice Positive Communication**

Positive communication is a critical parenting tip for busy parents who want to create a healthy and happy home environment. Practicing positive communication involves being mindful of the words and tone used when interacting with children and other family members. It's important to use words that are affirming, encouraging, and supportive.

Positive communication is one of the important parental tips and can help children feel valued, heard, and understood, which can boost their self-esteem and emotional well-being. It's also essential to listen actively to children's concerns and to provide constructive feedback when necessary. Practicing positive communication can help build trust and strengthen relationships between parents and their children. Busy parents may find it challenging to

practice positive communication, but it's crucial to remember that small efforts can make a big difference.

Final Words

Parenting is a challenging and rewarding journey, and for busy moms and dads, it can be even more challenging to balance the demands of work and family life. However, by following some smart and positive parenting tips, working parents can create a happy and healthy home environment that nurtures their children's emotional, social, and cognitive development. These tips include setting priorities, making a schedule, learning to say no, being present, and practicing positive communication.

By prioritizing family time, being mindful of how time is spent, setting boundaries, actively engaging with children, and using positive words and tone, busy parents can build strong relationships with their children and create a positive family dynamic. While it may take some effort and dedication to implement these tips, the benefits for both parents and children are immeasurable. By following these smart parenting tips, busy moms and dads can balance work and family responsibilities, reduce stress, and create a happy, healthy, and loving home environment.

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