

# Parenting Hacks For Parents With Little Kids



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## Abstract

Parenting little kids can be both challenging and rewarding, and finding effective hacks can make the journey smoother. One essential tip is to establish routines early on, as consistency helps children feel secure and understand expectations. Use visual schedules or charts to make daily activities fun and engaging for your little ones. Another hack is to create designated play zones filled with educational toys that encourage creativity and learning. For smoother mealtimes, involve your kids in food preparation, allowing them to choose between healthy options. This promotes independence while making them more likely to eat what's on their plate. Finally, always keep a "go-bag" ready with essentials like snacks, toys, and wipes for outings—this ensures you're prepared for anything, reducing stress for both you and your child.



## 1. Introduction

To make parenting little kids easier, embrace the power of multitasking by turning everyday chores into learning opportunities. For instance, involve your child in sorting laundry by color, which doubles as a fun way to teach them about colors and organization. Implement a reward system using stickers or tokens to encourage positive behavior and responsibility, such as picking up toys or brushing teeth. Meal prep in bulk on weekends and freeze kid-friendly portions, so you have quick, nutritious meals ready during busy weekdays. Also, create a calming bedtime routine with a warm bath, storytime, and a consistent sleep

schedule to help your child wind down and ensure a good night's sleep for everyone. Finally, practice self-care and take short breaks whenever possible, as a well-rested parent is better equipped to handle the demands of raising young children in Brisbane.

## 2. Tricks for Motivating Kids



Lardner is a member of the Offspring Facebook group, and always has great parenting wisdom to share. When I asked her where she learned many of her tricks, she told me: “At camp.” It makes sense—summer camp counselors must be facilitators, coaches and mentors all at once. They encourage kids to take risks, work in teams and look out for others. They have to navigate a world of unpredictability —“Susie found what in her bunk?!”—with leadership and composure.

One thing Lardner learned as a counselor was how to motivate kids. She shares some tips.

Instead of telling kids what not to do, encourage the behavior you wish to see

“When I was lifeguarding, instead of saying ‘Don’t run,’ I would always say “Walk with your safe feet,” Lardner says. “This was especially good for the younger kids.” Giving kid a clear picture of what they should be doing is much more effective than a list of “nos.”

**Give misbehaving kids a mission**

At camp, Lardner remembers there were some kids who were always shoving others. She discovered a way to keep things peaceful: Turn the misbehaving kids into leaders. As a parent in Brisbane, she recently used the tactic. Lardner explains: “On a Disney cruise, this 10- or 11-year-old kept bumping kids out of the way to go on a water slide. He bumped my three-year-old out of her turn, so I met him at the bottom. I said, ‘Hey! You’re way older than these kids, so you’re supposed to be showing them how to wait in line and help them at the top.’ Then I said, ‘This is Mickey. She is three and is just learning how to wait her turn. Can you show her how the big kids wait their turn?’ The kid became her body guard for the rest of the day. When he got ice cream, he brought her some. In my experience, kids react better if you remind them they’re capable of leadership instead of screaming, ‘Hey, wait your turn!’”

### **Remind kids what they’ve already accomplished**

With the more timid kids at camp, Lardner says she would remind them of their past “brave steps” to encourage them to go even further. It’s a technique her therapist calls “priming.” For instance, with a child who’s afraid of the water, she might say, “I saw you put your face in and blow three bubbles yesterday—that was awesome! How many do you think you can do today? If we get up to six, you can splash me with a kickboard.” It’s all about building trust with the kids and highlighting their acts of courage.

### **Imagine the desired result and work backwards**

In camp scenarios in which Lardner would feel like yelling at a kid, she would first ask herself whether doing so would help achieve the resolution she’s looking for. And always, the answer would be no. She once had to do a rescue in the water—one child pulled another off her flotation device. Lardner wanted to explode, but instead, she decided to “architect a disaster plan” in her head based on what she wanted the ultimate result to be.

“I needed them to have a peaceful and safe resolution where everyone felt empowered,” she says. “So I thought, how do I work backwards from there?” She decided to have a talk with both kids about how some children think going underwater is fun, but others find it scary. “I said, ‘See? Everyone was trying to have fun, but we forgot the major rule: No touching each other in the water.’ Lardner says she never wanted the so-called “bad kid” to walk away feeling embarrassed. Instead, she says she “wanted that kid to know what a hero acts like.”

## **3. Easy Hacks To Teach Your Child Good Manners**

Teaching manners to a young child may seem a little overwhelming, but it doesn’t have to be. You can encourage your child to be polite by teaching them a few key phrases and

greetings, encouraging them to understand the importance of empathy and compassion, and modeling good behavior so that they have a good example to look up to! This article explores these methods and more so that you can help your child learn the importance of good manners and etiquette.



### **Teach your child to say “hello” and “goodbye.”**

These phrases are the first steps to politely interacting with others. Practice by making a point to say “hello” or “good morning” when you wake up each day. As your child starts to get the hang of it, try to remind them to say hello to relatives and friends. If they forget to say hi, gently remind them. Try something like, “That’s our neighbor Tom! Do you want to say hello?”

### **Remind them to say “please” when asking for something.**

It wouldn’t be an article on manners without the phrase “please.” It’s the perfect way to ask for a question or favor in a gentle, polite way. Anytime your child asks for something, whether it be a cookie or some help with their homework, tell them to say “please” somewhere in that request. Encourage them not to forget by reminding them to say it before completing the task.

### **Make sure they know the importance of “thank you.”**

Expressing gratitude is an important part of good manners. Teach your child when it’s appropriate to say “thank you,” like after someone has helped them, answered a question,

or given them a gift. Gently remind your child to say thank you if you notice that they forgot. For example, if their friend gave them a picture they drew and your child takes it without a thank you, try something like, “Sarah drew that just for you! What do we say when someone gives us a gift?”

**Encourage them to sit still and avoid mess when eating.**

It’s very common for kids to play with their food. Who wouldn’t want to throw mashed potatoes if given the chance? Though tempting, there are many strategies you can employ to teach your child to be polite at the dinner table. First, try not to react when your child makes a big mess. If they’re throwing food, for example, they may just want your attention. Avoid laughing or getting angry, and simply ask them to stop. If they continue to make a mess, let them know that mealtime is over. Enacting gentle but firm boundaries can help your child understand the consequences of their actions.

**Help them learn how to make eye contact in conversation.**



Looking someone in the eye is an important part of having a meaningful conversation! It can be hard for anyone, child or adult, so understand if this step takes a little extra time. To practice, ask your child to look members of your family in the eye to determine their eye color. This can make it feel more like a game and can help them get more comfortable in conversation!

**Instruct them not to interrupt people in conversation.**

Help your child understand that when you speak to people, you take turns. Anytime you have a conversation and your child interrupts you, ask them to wait until you are done

speaking. Remain consistent anytime they interrupt you, and praise them for waiting their turn when they do!

#### **Educate them about being kind.**

Teach your child the importance of empathy, compassion, and care for their community. To help them understand empathy, encourage them to look at conflicts from another person's perspective. For example, if they are arguing with a sibling, ask both children to explain their point of view. Motivate them to really listen to the others' perspective by having them repeat back how their sibling feels. Come up with a compromise so that your child learns how to react positively even when they don't get exactly their way. You can also foster compassion through talking to your children about issues in the world that may cause people to experience hardship, like racism, poverty, and homophobia.

## **4. Nutritionist-Approved Hacks for Feeding Kids**



Here are the most important lessons I've learned, which should help you guide your kids to eat better.

### **1. Schedule Meals and Snacks**

Children need to eat every three to four hours: three meals, two snacks, and lots of fluids. If you plan for these, your child's diet will be much more balanced and they'll be less cranky. I put a cooler in the car when I'm out with my kids and stock it with carrots, pretzels, yogurt, and water so we don't have to rely on fast food.

## **2. Plan Dinner Menus in Advance**

If planning a weekly menu is too daunting, start with two or three days at a time. A good dinner doesn't have to be fancy, but it should be balanced: whole-grain bread, rice, or pasta; a fruit or a vegetable; and a protein source like lean meat, cheese, or beans. I often make simple entree soups or chili ahead of time and then freeze it; at dinnertime, I heat it up and add whole-grain bread and a bowl of sliced apples or melon to round out the meal.

## **3. Make One Meal for the Whole Family**

A few years ago, I got into a bad habit. I'd make two suppers—one that I knew the kids would like and one for my husband and me. It was exhausting. Now I prepare one meal for everybody and serve it family-style so the kids can pick and choose what they want. Children often mimic their parents' behavior, so one of these days, they'll eat most of the food I serve them.

## **4. Don't Comment on Your Kids' Eating Habits**

As hard as this may be, try not to comment on what or how much your kids are eating. Be as neutral as possible. Remember, you've done your job as a parent by serving balanced meals, and your kids are responsible for eating them. If you play food enforcer—saying things like "eat your vegetables"—your child will only resist.

## **5. Introduce New Foods Slowly**

Children are new-food-phobic by nature. I tell my kids that their taste buds must sometimes get used to a flavor before they'll like the taste. If you feel that your child isn't getting enough nutrients, talk to your pediatrician or dietitian about ways to add nutrients like adding a multivitamin or a nutrition shake to their eating schedule.

## **6. Make Healthy Food Fun**

If your kids won't eat vegetables, experiment with condiments and dips. Kathleen tried her first vegetable when I served her a thinly cut carrot with some ranch salad dressing. My children also like ketchup, hummus, salsa, and yogurt-based dressing.

## **7. Make Mornings Count**

Most families don't eat enough fiber on a daily basis, and breakfast is an easy place to sneak it in. Look for high-fiber cereals as a quick fix. Or make batches of whole-grain pancake and waffle batter that last all week.

## **8. Add a Touch of Sweetness**



Julia eats her cooked carrots with a bit of brown sugar, and I mix a little root beer into her prune juice to make prune-juice soda. Kathleen and Marty like a sprinkle of sugar on their fruit. I know that they'll eventually outgrow this need for extra sweetness, but in the meantime, they're eating fruits and vegetables.

### **9. Get Your Kids Cooking**

If your children become involved in choosing or preparing meals, they'll be more interested in eating what they've created. Take them to the store, and let them choose produce for you. If they're old enough, allow them to cut up vegetables and mix them into a salad. Although Julia refuses to eat fresh fruit, we make banana or apple muffins together—and she always eats them once they're done.

### **10. Think More, Not Less**

Remember, you—not your kids—are in charge of the foods that enter the house, so change your focus to adding more nutritious food choices on hand instead of stressing eating less sweets and treats. By having more readily-available healthy choices around, you can encourage your children to eat more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and dairy products.

### **11. Allow Treats in Moderation**



Having less healthy foods occasionally keeps them from becoming forbidden—and thus even more appealing. We call candy, soda, and cookies "sometimes" foods. I generally buy only healthy cereals such as Cheerios and Raisin Bran, but I let my kids have sugary cereals when

they visit their grandparents or when we're on vacation. And I treat them to McDonald's for lunch every so often.

### **12. Get Creative with Meals**

The more creative the meal is, the greater the variety of foods my kids eat. We make smiley-face pancakes and give food silly names. (Broccoli florets are "baby trees" or "dinosaur food.") Anything mini is always a hit too. I often use cookie cutters to turn toast into hearts and stars, which the children love.

### **13. Be a Good Role Model**

It's very important for parents in Brisbane to model positive attitudes and habits around food as well, so it can be helpful to examine your own beliefs about food. Trust your body to tell you when you're hungry and when you're full, and your kids will learn to do the same. And don't be afraid to seek professional help for developing a healthy relationship with food; many of us didn't grow up with healthy food habits and therapy may be able to help you re-establish your own healthy habits.

Above all else, realize that what your kids eat over time is what really matters. Having popcorn at the movies or eating an ice-cream sundae are some of life's real pleasures. As long as you balance these times with nutritious food choices and physical activity, your children will be fine.

## **5. Ways to keep kids active**



Kids that are getting a good amount of exercise will feel the benefits in everything from bone and muscle strength to concentration skills and mood. It's good to incorporate a mixture of moderate and vigorous activity into each week. Examples of moderate activity include walking, cycling and riding a scooter, while vigorous activity includes playing chase, energetic dancing, jumping, gymnastics and football. According to the NHS website, children and parents should be aiming for the following:

Kids aged five to 16 need to be active for at least 60 minutes each day

Kids under five need three hours of activity a day

### **Walk one mile**

The Daily Mile campaign was initiated by headmistress Elaine Wyllie, when she realised that her pupils, like many others, were not as fit as they could be. The aim of the daily mile is to improve the physical, emotional and social health of children, regardless of age or personal circumstances. Whether children walk, skip or run, the goal remains the same. Teachers have seen a change in concentration levels, mood, behaviour and general wellbeing in kids that have incorporated this into their daily routine. A fitness tracker can be a fun way to time this, or you can simply spend 15 minutes making your way around the block.

### **Water play**

Nothing will get kids moving like a spray of ice cold water. Whether you pick up some cheap water shooters or turn on the hose in the garden, this activity should keep everyone from toddlers to teens happy. Want to try something new? Turn a traditional egg and spoon race on its head by switching the eggs for water bombs – the winner will then get to chase his or her victims with their intact water bomb. One word of warning, you need to be able to give as good as you get.

### **Treasure hunt**

Whether you're searching for Pokémon, some fake gold coins or just pieces of cut out paper, you may be surprised at just how fast kids move when there's a treasure hunt on offer. Spread your treasure around high and low, whether it's indoors or in your garden. This is a great game for siblings together or a child playing solo. If you want to go the whole hog, make a treasure map look authentic with a bit of tea staining. There are plenty of treasure hunt clues and free printable graphics if you look online. Prizes can include stickers, fake costume jewellery, stick-on badges or just honour!

### **Let's dance**

Simply turning on some music and dancing with your kids is a lovely way to spend an afternoon. Have a competition for the craziest dance move, try your hand at breakdancing,

bellydancing or even keeping a hula hoop up. It's remarkable how much entertainment a couple of balloons can create too. See who can win at the 'keeping them from touching the floor' game – you never know, they may have an Olympic career ahead of them. The only equipment you'll need is a good soundtrack.

### **Time them**

If your child has a bit of competitive spirit, try using a stopwatch and time them running the length of the garden – they'll be keen to beat their personal best. You may also be amazed at how quickly their time improves with regular practice. Try adding in star jumps or hopping on one foot for comedy effect. You could even host a mini sports day using our ideas for games and treats.

### **Cycling**



Cycling as a family makes a great day out. Take your bikes out to your nearest park or countryside cycle route and enjoy exploring in the fresh summer air. Riding a bike helps to find-tune balance and co-ordination, as well as building up leg and core strength. Make sure you take plenty of water and snacks in your rucksack if you plan on going for a while.

### **Yoga**

This is an easy one to do either at home with an online tutorial or out in a class setting. Yoga is a great and safe way to work on balance, flexibility and strength whilst also working on breathing techniques. Research suggests that there are great mental benefits to practising yoga as well as physical, as it helps to create a sense of calm whilst reducing stress and

tension. A short yoga session would make for a relaxing way to wind down after a busy day as a family.

### **Climbing**

Climbing uses every part of your body and will give your kids an amazing sense of achievement when they complete a route. Take them down to a dedicated climbing gym, or a number of leisure centres now have climbing walls too. You might also be near to an outdoor climbing wall. Look for places that offer introductory lessons if it's their first time. For more information on how to get started visit the British Mountaineering Council's website.

### **Rollerblading**

For an entertaining way to develop balance, coordination and agility, rollerblading or skateboarding are fun options. It's a great low-impact sport that builds lower body strength. Visit an indoor roller rink or head down to your local skate park which you can find on The Skatepark Projects website.

### **Skipping**

A cheap and easy way of getting your kids active, you can get them skipping in your garden if you have one, or take them down to your local park. It's an easy way of getting their heart rate up and can be adapted to make a fun group or solo activity. Make sure you've got a longer rope if you're in a group and someone can hold either end whilst people jump in the middle.

## **6. Cleaning Hacks For Busy Parents With Young Children**



Being a parent and raising children is likely to leave you with little to no time to maintain your home's cleanliness and hygiene. The constant spills, leaks, and messes created by the little ones can overwhelm you. The presence of dirt and stains not only ruin your home's appearance but also pose health risks. Thus, it is essential to do the cleaning chores regularly to prevent infections and diseases. Hiring professional bond cleaners in Brisbane is a good option if you are nearing the end of your tenancy. You can also hire their services for regular cleaning. However, if you want to do it on your own, you must know how to keep the house clean in limited time. You can use certain time-saving tricks and strategies for dealing with dirt and dust efficiently. Here are the 10 cleaning hacks for busy parents with young children. Use these tips to restore the shine of your house.

### **1. Quick Microwave Cleaning**

Take a microwave-safe bowl and fill it up with a few slices of lemon and water. Let it microwave for about 2 minutes. The steam will help in loosening up the food splatters, allowing you to easily wipe it off. The lemon will introduce a fresh fragrance as well. To tackle tough spots, use a paste made of water and baking soda after steaming. Let it sit there for a few minutes, and follow up with a thorough wipe.

### **2. Use Weekdays For Most Cleaning Tasks**

Most people have the habit of managing all the cleaning tasks on weekends. This makes it difficult for you to complete them together. Also, it takes all your free time which you otherwise would have spent with your kids, looking after them. So, the ideal way to approach the situation is to break down cleaning tasks into small chunks. Instead of spending your complete weekend cleaning, just take 30 minutes and focus on one cleaning task each weekday.

### **3. Use Vinegar for Multipurpose Cleaning**



The vinegar is a cheap yet versatile cleaner, and that is why it is often used for expert bond cleaning in Brisbane. Combine and mix equal parts of water and vinegar. Add them to a spray bottle. This solution is ideal for tackling several surfaces, such as glass, countertops, and floors. It will effectively break down the grime and grease while also serving as a natural disinfectant.

#### **4. Dryer Sheets for Streamlining Dusting**

Dryer sheets are the best option for dusting purposes. They are effective at capturing dust and leaving behind a pleasant fragrance. Run the dryer sheets over multiple surfaces, including baseboards, blinds, and electronics, for a rapid clean. To further improve their power of collecting dust, lightly dampen them before using.

#### **5. Easily Spot Clean Areas**

Keeping a basket containing cleaning supplies in high-traffic spaces is ideal. Utilise disposable wipes or a quick spray of DIY multipurpose cleaner to deal with any mess immediately. This will stop them from becoming tough stains that are difficult to eliminate. A proactive approach like this saves you a lot of time on deep cleaning sessions and makes professional bond cleaning Brisbane easier when you are about to leave your rental property.

#### **6. Keep Your Home Organised With Baskets**

Use baskets and bins for holding items such as shoes, toys, and other similar stuff. Teach your kids to keep their stuff in their allocated containers to make way for an easier cleaning process. Keeping the basket labelled will help the kid identify which item belongs to it.

#### **7. Thirty-Minute Daily Cleanup**

Every day, set a timer to conduct a family cleanup session. Let all your family members contribute to a tidy space, cleaning up specific areas. They can also complete simple tasks such as decluttering, organising the items, or sorting through the mail. Doing so daily makes the deep cleaning sessions easier and helps maintain an organised and hygienic space.

#### **8. Utilise the Versatility of Dishwasher**

You can use the dishwasher for more things than just cleaning the dishes. Use it to wash small items like toothbrush holders, small plastic toys, and the vacuum cleaner's detachable parts. It will save you time and ensure a thorough cleaning of such objects.

#### **9. Use Overnight Cleaning Solutions**

According to expert bond cleaners in Brisbane, the best way to use your DIY cleaning solution to its full potential is by letting it work overnight. For example, generously sprinkle baking soda on the oven's interior, stovetops, or sinks, and follow up with spraying vinegar.

Let both the ingredient work their magic overnight. The next morning, a quick wipe-down will be sufficient to reveal sparkling surfaces.

#### **10. Invest in a Handheld Vacuum**



A portable vacuum tool provides a rapid and efficient solution for tackling messes. Use it in commonly used spaces like the kitchen, dining room, and living room for a smooth spot cleaning. Due to its lightweight and navigable design, the handheld vacuum is the perfect choice for reaching tight corners, narrow spaces, pet areas, and upholstery.

#### **Conclusion**

Parenting little kids in Brisbane can be demanding, but with a few smart hacks, it can also be more manageable and enjoyable. By establishing routines, involving your children in daily tasks, and creating a structured yet flexible environment, you can foster their independence and learning while making life easier for the whole family. Remember, it's essential to find what works best for you and your children, and don't hesitate to prioritize self-care. A balanced approach will not only help you navigate the challenges of parenting but also create lasting, positive memories with your little ones.



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