



## Tipsheet: Peaceful Parenting Tips

During stressful times it can be very challenging for parents to deal with the daily issues related to raising children. Both parents and children may respond to external situations by venting anger and frustration on other family members.

Parents can break this negative cycle by using nonviolent parenting skills and teaching children to deal with personal conflicts in respectful ways.

### Nonviolent Ways to Raise Children

1. Spend quality time with your kids as often and as long as you can.
2. Hold family celebrations in special places.
3. Play family games together.
4. Encourage playfulness, openness and displays of affection among family members.
5. Keep a family scrapbook or photo album to record happy memories.
6. Balance affirmation and cooperation, freedom and firmness. Find ways to encourage self-governance skills as your child grows.
7. Plan ahead to avoid potential conflict situations, such as using spill-proof cups, child-proofing your home, removing problem-causing items, etc.
8. Minimize the use of "no" and demands. Use gentle physical contact and a normal tone of voice to influence children rather than grabbing, yelling or threatening.
9. Don't take your bad mood out on your child. If you feel down or frustrated, take a time-out. If you can't control your anger, think about seeking some professional help.
10. Encourage children to help each other as much as possible because nonviolence feeds on cooperation.
11. Stay out of child-to-child conflicts unless someone is getting hurt. Suggest ways to settle conflicts without physical fighting.
12. Teach children communication skills that build understanding between people such as using "I" statements and active-listening techniques.
13. Listen to children and respect their comments.
14. Limit the amount of time spent watching TV. Set guidelines for what your child can view. If a violent program is allowed, watch it with your child. After the program, discuss what nonviolent approaches could be used in similar real-life situations.
15. Monitor music listening habits, especially songs with violent lyrics. Keep a variety of tapes and CDs with nonviolent themes.
16. Discourage the use of war toys or combative video games. Give peaceful toys and nonviolent games to children.
17. Ignore minor infractions. Allow every child to make mistakes from time to time. Deal with the larger problems instead.
18. Make punishment a last resort for solving problems. As a family, decide what consequences fit certain behaviors.
19. Tell your children that you love them often.

**Source:** *Peaceful Parenting in a Violent World*, Joseph N. Cress, Ph.D., Burt Berlowe

**Resources:** [United Way 2-1-1™](#) is a free and confidential, 24-hour information/referral line that can connect you to helpful programs and resources in our community. Just dial 2-1-1 or 651-291-0211.