



Wise & Wonderful Winter/Spring 2015

Our 8 Best Parenting Tips for 2015

by Denise Rowden, Empowering Parents Coach



Parenting is one job that never takes a holiday vacation. As families are celebrating holidays, parents are also coping with sibling bickering, backtalk, temper tantrums, and power struggles. Here at *Empowering Parents*, we hear about these struggles every day. The fact that you, as a parent, are willing to reach out and share your challenges and struggles with us speaks volumes about your commitment to building a good life for you and your family.



1. Control what you can: your response. Don't let your emotions get the better of you by responding with harsh punishments in the moment. The reality is, when you are giving a consequence, it isn't about how bad it stings or how much you inconvenience your child. It really is about how consistent you are. Being steady, measured and predictable will work even if your child is not demonstrating his or her discomfort in a visible manner. Stay focused on what you do have control over: your response. The wonderful thing about being confident in this process is that you can stay calm *and* in their corner, which is where you want to be anyway.

2. Walking away is often the best response in the moment. When parents call into our coaching line, they are frequently frustrated and burned out from constant power struggles. The technique we recommend often is setting the limit and walking away. This means not engaging in a power struggle with your child. When you respond this way, you are showing your child you will no longer reinforce negative behavior. By taking some time to cool down and allowing your child to do the same, you are increasing the chance that you will be able to have a calm conversation with your child that's more effective and productive.



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Your job as a parent is to provide your child with the tools and opportunities to be successful. What they do with those tools and opportunities is not something you have control over.



3. Tackle one behavior or issue at a time.

When we speak with parents, they're often focusing on several behavior issues at once. This is understandable. School attendance, grades, chores, arguing and tantrums are all valid reasons for a parent to step in and teach their kids how to meet their responsibilities respectfully and on time. Trying to do it all at once is not an effective way of bringing about behavior change. Most parents and kids just become too overwhelmed with the pressure to improve every part of their lives at once. Giving yourself permission to slow down and focus on a plan to help your child practice better behavior will be more effective in the long run. It will give you and your child a chance to stay grounded and clear about expectations and limits at home and school.

4. Role model the behavior you want to see.

Role modeling is a powerful way to influence good behavior. It's true that kids *watch* what we *do* more than they *listen* to what we *say*. Even if it doesn't *seem* as if you are having any influence at all on your child's choices, remember that perception is not always reality. If you're practicing a consistent method of teaching and coaching your child

with clear limits, expectations and appropriate consequences and rewards, then you're providing them with the opportunity to solve their problems more successfully. Remember, your job as a parent is to provide them with the tools and opportunities to be successful. What they do with those tools and opportunities is not something you have control over.

5. Don't personalize behavior. When you are in the midst of an escalated situation, you might not have the ability to look at all sides with a clear, objective lens. It's easy (and normal) to personalize behavior that seems to be directed at you. One of the tools many parents find helpful is to imagine the situation as if you are an outsider. How would you respond to a neighbor or their child exhibiting the same behavior? Chances are, even if you care about your neighbor and their family, you would implement consequences for specific behaviors. On the flip side, you might also be willing to let some things go, and recognize that the inappropriate behavior is more about that person having a bad day or being in a bad mood.

COOKING WITH KIDS

Chunks of all white meat chicken breasts coated in breadcrumbs and parmesan cheese then baked until golden. An easy chicken recipe your whole family will love. What can be more kid friendly than chicken nuggets, even the pickiest kids like them. Serve them with ketchup, bbq sauce or whatever you like to dip your nuggets into. Adults can serve them over your favorite salad for a satisfying lunch.

Ingredients:

16 oz (2 large) skinless boneless chicken breasts, cut into even bit sized pieces
salt and pepper to taste
2 tsp olive oil
6 tbsp whole wheat Italian seasoned breadcrumbs
2 tbsp panko
2 tbsp grated parmesan cheese
olive oil spray (I used my [Misto](#))

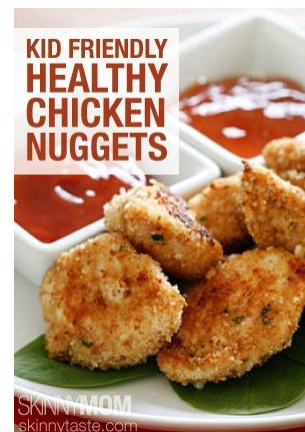
Directions:

Preheat oven to 425°. **Spray** a baking sheet with olive oil spray.

Put the olive oil in one bowl and the breadcrumbs, panko and parmesan cheese in another.

Season chicken with salt and pepper, then put in the bowl with the olive oil and **mix well** so the olive oil evenly coats all of the chicken.

Put a few chunks of chicken at a time into the breadcrumb mixture to coat, then on the baking sheet. Lightly **spray** the top with olive oil spray then **bake** 8 - 10 minutes. **Turn** over then **cook** another 4 - 5 minutes or until cooked though.



The Parent Support Corner

Media Glossary: Online and Texting Acronyms

afc= away from the computer
atm= at the moment
ayt= are you there?
ayor= at your own risk
bbfn= bye-bye for now
b4n= bye for now
cul8r= see you later
dc= don't care
idk= I don't know
dos= dad over shoulder
dwb= don't write back
eod= end of discussion
f2f= face to face
fyeo= for your eyes only
g2g= got to go
gal= get a life
gl= good luck
gmta= great minds



think alike
hth= hope this helps

h&k= hugs and kisses
idc= I don't care
iykwim= if you know what I mean
imo= in my opinion
irl= in real life
jk= just kidding
jj= just joking
jw= just wondering
l8= late
lyl= love you lots
lylas= love you like a sister
lylab= love you like a brother
mos= mom over shoulder
nm or nvm= never mind
np= no problem
ntm= not too much
nw= no way

ot= off topic
otp= on the phone
p911= parent alert

pal= parents are listening
pm= private message
pos= parent over shoulder
prw= parents are watching
rents= parents
rotf= rolling on the floor
rme= rolling my eyes
ruok= are you okay?
st2moro= same time tomorrow
swak= sealed with a kiss
tmb= text me back
tmi= too much information
tfn= ta ta for now



Our 8 Best Parenting Tips for 2015 continued from pg 1

6. **Aim for "good enough," not "perfect."** Too often we look to those around us and compare our lives, our kids, and our parenting to what we see others doing. We often find ourselves coming up short as compared to the lives we believe other people are living. Don't give into that "not good enough" mentality! Most people are not going to share the struggles they face with others. Everyone struggles and no one lives a perfect life. Everyone is doing the best they can, including you. You're human. You're not going to do everything perfectly all the time. Sometimes you are going to continue engaging in a power struggle when you wish you would have walked away. Sometimes you will raise your voice when you wish you would have modeled calm for your child. You can learn from every experience and try to do it differently the next time. What would you tell your best friend if she was experiencing similar parenting issues? Chances are, you wouldn't tell her that she is a failure at parenting. You would probably give some encouraging words of support, or help her to find the humor in the situation, if possible. Remember, too, that your child is doing the best she can. At a young age, she doesn't have the skills and strategies to manage the feelings that come along with being human. We're all just doing our best to navigate through life. The more we remember this, the more it can help us to have empathy when someone—your child, your spouse, yourself, or anyone else in your life—is struggling.

7. **Don't underestimate the importance of self-care.** Self-care is often overlooked in our hectic day-to-day lives. It's difficult to be an effective parent when you are stressed out and exhausted all the time. By practicing self-care, you will have the energy to tackle your child's behavior and feel empowered to consistently apply new parenting tools. Having a "self care plan" can be useful in times of stress. This can be anything you want it to be, from doing an activity you enjoy, taking part in physical recreation, journaling, or talking with someone about the issues you are facing. Many of the families we speak with comment on how helpful it is to have the opportunity to call us when they are stressed or in highly emotional situations. We're here to help in those exact moments.

8. **Have patience. Behavior change is a process, not an event.** Just like behaviors are learned and developed over time, so does changing those behaviors and learning new ways to solve problems take time. It is important to remember that creating change first starts with the parent. The more consistent

Around Town

For the love of LEGO party

February 2015 (undated)

Enjoy an evening of games, music, beverages, and food at Adult Night at Legoland Discovery Center.

Valentine's Day garden party

February 14, 2015

Let romance bloom with an elegant evening of cocktails, dancing, dessert, and live entertainment at Valentines in the Garden at Atlanta Botanical Garden.

Taste Athens

February 22, 2015

Sample food from 50 restaurants, taste beer & wine, and listen to live music at A Taste of Athens at The Classic Center.

Super Hero Day

March 7, 2015

1 child age 12 or under in super-hero costume is free w/ each paid adult on Georgia Aquarium Super Hero Day.

Colonial life

March 27 - 29, 2015

See life in 1790s at the 18th Century Colonial Market Faire, including historical crafts, games, military drills, music, and treats at Fort Yargo State Park in Winder.

Pinnacle



February: "Matters of the Heart"

We Love America

Be My Valentine

Healthy Habits (2 weeks)

March: "Marching Into Spring"

Tribute to Dr. Seuss

March Winds

Birds & Butterflies

Spring Things

Interesting Insects

What's Happening...

February

2/2: Tooth Fairy Visit

2/6: Coke Fundraiser

2/13: Valentine Party

2/16-20: Pre-K School Break

MARCH

3/2-6: Dr Seuss Week

3/16-20: Book Fair

3/18: Muffins for mom

3/23: Pre-K Workday

3/24: Dauset Trails in house fieldtrip

FAMILY EVENT

GEORGIA NATIONAL
RODEO
FEB. 19-21 2015

TRY SOMETHING
NEW & EXCITING

This exciting event is held every February at the Georgia National Fairgrounds & Agricenter in Perry, Georgia; and is officially sanctioned by the PRCA (Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association). It features specialty acts plus cowboys & cowgirls from across the country competing in seven categories: saddle bronc riding, bareback riding, tie down roping, steer wrestling, team roping, bull riding, and barrel racing.

