

## HELPFUL HINTS and SERIOUS SUGGESTIONS

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### Support One Another



Our family is the place where we hand our heart, the place we feel unconditionally accepted and loved.

- We do not have to agree with each other, but acceptance of one another as individuals is real loving.
- Be spontaneous, only when you bend will you not break.
- Tell family members what you appreciate about them, when they least expect it. And Often.
- Say “please” and “thank you” to your child. Often the garage mechanic is treated with more politeness than the family members.
- Keep the non-custodial parent informed. No matter how intense your feelings are – a child needs both parents in their life.
- Don’t criticize family members or a former spouse. Children love unconditionally.
- Remember how you felt when you were a child.
- Think about how you would like your child’s memories of growing up to be, then create that for them.
- Create family traditions that involve everyone.
- Encourage your child. It builds their self-confidence and feelings of worth. Focus on their positive strengths. Recognize improvement and effort – not just accomplishment.
- Respect your child. It lays a foundation of self-respect.
- Avoid subtle competition between brothers and sisters.
- Have faith in your child, so they can believe in themselves.
- Accept your children for their strengths and weaknesses. Don’t make love and acceptance dependent on behavior.
- Improve your parenting skills, by reading appropriate books, articles, or attending workshops. We never hesitate to take lessons for golf or tennis. Being a parent is the most important responsibility you will ever have.

- Send love notes in your child’s lunch or put one under their pillow at night. Give little presents for no particular reason – a favorite dessert or do their chores for them, or extend curfew 30 minutes.
- You are the most significant role model your child will ever have...children follow where you walk – not where you point.
- Spend time alone with each child.
- Share at least one meal a day together, even if doing this means eating at unusual times.
- Physically hug your child and say often – I LOVE YOU!

### Be Active in Your Child’s Life



Although, as an adult, we have demanding schedules, there will never be an appointment or meeting as beneficial as attending a function with or for your child. The most lasting of all gifts you can give them...is the memory that their parent cared enough to send themselves.

- Attend as many school functions as possible – no matter how tired or uncomfortable you may feel – do it for them.
- Attend their activities: baseball, gymnastics, school plays, recitals, etc. The benchwarmers or the chorus members need your presence as much as the stars. As they grow up they won’t remember if they played or the final score – only whether you were there or not.
- Make time to play together, if only a picnic or a walk in the forest preserve. The laundry, the grass, and the cleaning will always be there – your child won’t.

