

BUILDING CHARACTER

"Initially, teaching a child the difference between right and wrong is a pretty **straightforward** proposition: Cheerios tossed on the floor are a no-no; hitting a sibling is a bigger one. But add core values such as honesty, fairness, dependability and compassion to the mix, and character lessons get a lot more complicated.

How do you teach character? The way to teach children good character remains pretty basic, and incredibly important. Essentially, character educators say, it has a lot to do with talking with our kids more, communicating our beliefs and practicing what we preach. Here, from the experts, are the **ABC's** of character building:

Walk the walk. in daily family life, parents need to consistently model the values they want in their children. You can't sit on the fence, saying one thing and doing another. What a parent does is so much more important than what he or she says.

Show some respect. Kids first witness and develop good character traits through interactions between family members. The most essential step for parents is to consistently treat their children in a respectful manner.

Tell it like it is. Given the many questionable messages wafting through our children's world, it's easy enough for parents to **vocalize** their objections. Nobody's too busy to tell it like it is when they see something on TV. If your kids are watching a show and you think what a character does or says is awful, it doesn't take much effort to tell your kids that. Your opinions count and they'll hear your messages.

Promote charity and social justice. Ask kids to earmark a portion of their allowance for a charity of their own choosing. Assist them with volunteer service projects in your area. Such activities encourage children to take an interest in the world at large promoting the virtues of charity, social justice and having the courage of your conviction.

Find teaching moments. Stopping to help an elderly neighbor or going back into the store to tell the cashier that he gave you too much change are ordinary events with immeasurable impact on a kid's psyche.

“ Watch your thoughts; they become words.
Watch your words; they become actions.
Watch your actions; they become **habits**.
Watch your habits; they become character. ”
Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.

TEN MISTAKES PARENTS MAKE WITH TEENS

1. *Lecture Rather Than Discuss*

We want our teens to grow into responsible adults able to make decisions. Why then do we **fall** back on the old lecture when we should be using any problem area as an opportunity to teach a child the process of making a good decision? Treating them like little children rather than budding adults simply alienates teens. This is not to say they no longer need guidance, it just has to be handled in a more adult manner, with discussion, negotiation, and understanding of the conflicting needs of maturing teens.

2. *Ignore the Obvious*

Our teens are suddenly sleeping late, missing classes, missing curfew, not introducing new **friends**, and we write it off as 'normal teen behavior.' We often wait until the situation is urgent, burying our heads in the sand to avoid confrontation and more displays of our teen's belligerent, hostile attitude.

3. *Not Following Through on Rules and Consequences*

You are grounded!' 'No allowance this week!' Most parents have no problem **creating** punishments for breaking the rules. It's what happens a few days or so later that creates the cycle of defiance; your teen drives you nuts until you back down on the consequence. If you set rules, it is important to make clear in advance the consequences for breaking that rule. If that rule is broken, if you do not enforce the consequences you set, your teen has just learned that getting away with breaking the rules is really a piece of cake.

4. *Setting Unreasonable Goals*

Make sure that when you set goals, they are attainable. Set expectations that allow the child to succeed based on his or her abilities.

5. *Pointing Out Only the Negative, Expecting Only the Positive*

Do you just expect good behavior and good grades with little encouragement or praises, yet quickly jump on every mistake or example of poor judgment like a pit bull? Some parents believe a job well done is its own reward. While this is true, there is nothing that encourages a child more than the positive feedback of a parent. This is not to say you should jump up and down with joy just because your child didn't skip class this week. If you set consequences for bad behavior, the reward is getting to do the things they normally enjoy.

6. *Leaving the Educating up to 'Someone Else'*

Assuming your child will learn **about** the dangers of drugs, alcohol, and other risky behaviors at school or elsewhere is a risky assumption at best. **Studies** have shown kids whose parents talk to them about high-risk behaviors **and** who set clear guidelines about the consequences for engaging in **these** behaviors are less likely to smoke, **drink** and use **drugs**.

7. *Giving Up on Family Time*

Family time is essential. Setting **time** aside every day for the family to eat together and talk is one of the best defenses against negative peer influences on your teens. Make time for your children on a daily basis to keep communication open.

8. *Assume Good Grades Mean No Other Problems*

A smart kid who does well in school may be able to maintain good grades even though they are drinking or **using** drugs. Don't write off other signs of trouble just because the grades are not slipping.

9. *Not Taking the Time to Know What's Up with Adolescents Today*

We were all teens once. But teens are different every generation. They have **different** music and other **cultural** influences. Media influences are **much** stronger today as well.

10. *Giving Up Too Soon*

Your teen is going to test your resolve. They are going to test it a lot. Don't give up. Be consistent. Stay **vigilant**. Don't relinquish your responsibility.

CBTS PROCTOR TRAINING

Wednesday, March 21, 2007

6:30 p.m.

7288 West Miriam Way (3825 South)

Magna, Utah

Brian & Jennifer Culbert's home

Topic: Substance Abuse

We are once again having a potluck dinner along with proctor training. Phase contact Lori and let her know what you will be bringing.

We are sincerely appreciative of Candie and Cody Wright offering their home to host proctor training in February. Everyone in attendance enjoyed the delicious potluck dinner and getting to know each other better. Tanya Lang's presentation on Working with Biological Families was well received and provided those in attendance with great ideas and suggestions. If you would like to host proctor training in your home phase let Lori know.

REMINDER

Proctors providing services for DCFS youth are REQUIRED to participate in a 12 hour training. We have arranged to have these trainings held in the evening in order to better fit your schedule. The next session of trainings will be held on the following days:

Tuesday, March 6 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Thursday, March 8 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Tuesday, March 20 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Thursday, March 22 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Location: 7575 South 900 East (RISE)

Contact Lori ASAP to sign up to attend this meeting.

CBTS

Office: 268-4044

Fax: 263-0926

www.cbtsutah.com

Lori Nadeau, Co-Owner/C.F.O.

Mobile: 634-5379

cbts@xmission.com

Carlos Serna, Co-Owner/C.O.O.

Mobile: 558-4845

cserna@xmission.com

Kim Ontiveros, Program Supervisor

Mobile: 557-9023

kontiver@xmission.com

Anna Lieber, Proctor Program Coordinator

Mobile: 557-7814

alieber@xmission.com

Nick Renfro, Group Coordinator I

Proctor Specialist

Mobile: 557-6327

Sara Bannon, Proctor Program Specialist

Mobile: 558-5668

sbannon@xmission.com

Kris Phillips, Proctor Program Specialist

Mobile: 502-5687

kphillips@xmission.com

Kim Sorensen, L.C.S.W.

Mobile: 949-8067

ksorensen@xmission.com

Amber Allan, Intern

Mobile: 558-2507

aallan@xmission.com

TIPS FOR REDUCING HASSLES

We know how we want to parent and we **try**. Most of the time, we at least come close. But every once in a while we need reminders. The following are common sense parenting tips that **make** the job of raising children less of a hassle for parents and children.

RULES & EXPECTATIONS

1. Make rules and establish expectations that are reasonable and appropriate to the child's age, **maturity** and abilities. If you are having trouble with a child not meeting your standards, check with other parents to see if your standards are **fair**.

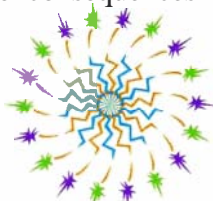
2. Make rules only if you are willing to expend the time and energy to consistently enforce the rule. Yelling and nagging is hard on everyone. Children believe what we do, not what we say we are going to do.

3. Communicate your expectations to the child, simply: Speak at the child's level of **understanding**. To check for **understanding**, don't say, 'Do you understand!' Instead, ask the child to explain back to you what is expected.

4. Offer limited choices instead of **'What** do you want?' unless a **free** choice is acceptable. Avoid the if-then struggle. Instead try 'when you do this, you *can* do that.'

5. Don't make a rule or a threat that cannot be enforced.

6. **Expect** children to test every rule. Know what the consequences will be before you are tested. Let them know what the consequences are before they do the testing.



AVOIDING PROBLEMS

1. Make expectations clear and expect to repeat them frequently.

2. Give attention to the behaviors you want to encourage; 'catch them being good.' Any behavior that draws attention of any kind will be repeated.

3. Don't expect more from your child than you expect from yourself.

4. Listen to your child's feelings. Feelings are more important than the events and circumstances that are responsible for the feelings.

5. Trust your child to solve his or her own problems and **learn from** their own mistakes. Such lessons are learned faster and the results last a lifetime.



TALKING MISTAKES

1. Don't ask a child if he did something wrong when in fact you know that he did. This encourages them to lie. Get on with the necessary **discipline**.

2. Don't **try** to be **fair** by **finding** out 'Which one of you did **this!** If you didn't see who did it, discipline all present unless the 'guilty' person admits to the 'crime.'

3. Criticism does not teach children better behavior. Direct constructive comments at a child's behavior, not at their character. Constructive criticism includes restating original expectations and checking for understanding.

HOW TO HAVE A GREAT RELATIONSHIP **WITH** YOUR PARENTS



1. Respect each other

Without mutual respect, any relationship will be an unhappy one. People who respect each other:

- Value each other's opinions
- Listen to each other
- Disagree without **screaming** or insults

2. Communicate

Your parents **want** to know what's going on in your life. If you keep them in the dark, they won't know when you need their help or whether they can trust you. Tell them what you're up to, share your thoughts and feelings with them and seek their advice for your problems. Communication builds closeness.

3. Build Trust

Trust is **your** key to **freedom**. The way to build trust is through honesty and responsibility. Honesty means you don't lie or manipulate. Responsibility means you are reliable and **can** be counted on to use good judgment.

Try out the following discussion questions with your parents and writing **assignments** to further develop your family relationships:

- What things do your parents do that really bug you?
- What do you do that really bugs your parents?
- What are some things you would like to talk to your parents about but feel you can't?
- Do you think your parents should give you total **freedom**, with no limits at **all**? If not, what should those limits be?
- Do you respect your parents? How do you show it? In what ways would you like your parents to show you respect? Have you earned that respect? How?
- In an ideal relationship with your parents, what would be their responsibility to you and yours to them?
- What differences exist between your parents' values and your own? Do you **try** to consider their values when you talk to them about **difficult** issues?

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS



1. Has there ever been a time when your parents trusted you and you let them down? What happened? Was it harder to get them to trust you **afterwards**? Were you able to rebuild the lost trust? How? What have you learned **from** this experience?

2. Watch a television program that has both parents and children as characters. Analyze their relationships. How do they treat each other? Are they respectful? How well do they communicate? Do they trust each other? What is good about their relationship? What is bad about it?

3. If you had the power to **change** any aspect of your relationship with your parents, what would it be? Is there anything you could do to make it happen? What?