

ideas for parents

Easy Ways to Build Assets for and with Your Child

FAST FACTS

ASSET CATEGORY

Positive Values

The more your child develops positive values that guide her or his behavior, the more likely he or she is to make positive choices and grow up healthy.

Youth Speak

- "Don't just 'tolerate' people who are different from you, accept them."
- "Good families teach good values."
- "Talk about the things that mean something to you."

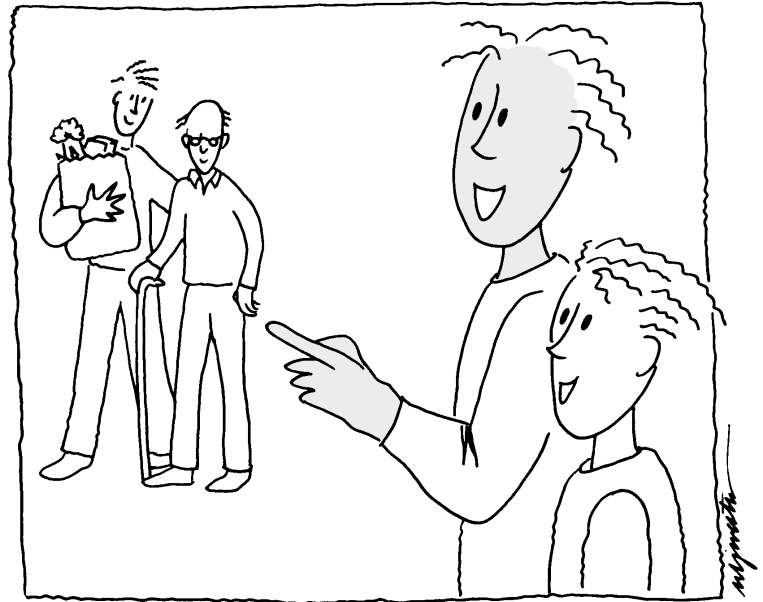
The Importance of Values

Values shape our relationships, our behaviors, our choices, and our sense of who we are. The more positive our values, the more positive our actions.

By helping our children develop positive values and modeling positive behavior based on values, we:

- Help them listen to their conscience.
- Build their integrity.
- Encourage them to help others.
- Help them become independent.
- Encourage their ability to tell right from wrong.
- Give them a way to figure out how to be happy.

"The values you teach your children are their best protection from the influences of peer pressure and the temptations of



consumer culture," say Richard and Linda Eyre, authors of *Teaching Your Children Values*. "With their own values clearly defined, your children can make their own decisions—rather than imitate their friends or the latest fashions."

Quick Tip:
Think about how you act. Your actions reveal your true values.

6 Key Areas of Positive Values

Search Institute researchers have identified six positive-values assets that are crucial for helping young people grow up healthy. Check the areas of strength in your child's life.

- Caring**—Your child places high value on helping other people.
- Equality and social justice**—Your child places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.
- Integrity**—Your child acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs.
- Honesty**—Your child "tells the truth even when it is not easy."
- Responsibility**—Your child accepts and takes personal responsibility.
- Restraint**—Your child believes it's important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.

Upcoming issues of *Ideas for Parents* address all six positive-values assets.

Teaching Values through the Years

Your Family Values

Age Ways to Teach Values

- 0-1
 - Hold your baby. Smile at your baby. Love your baby.
 - Create a caring atmosphere in your home.
 - Determine your family's values now. Model these values and teach them as your child grows.
- 2-3
 - When you vote, take your child along. Explain in simple language what you're doing.
 - Find easy ways your child can care for others, such as giving hugs.
 - Notice and comment when your child acts in caring ways.
- 4-5
 - Have your child help you sort items you no longer use and donate them to a worthy cause.
 - Give your child a simple task he or she can do for others.
 - Teach your child how to care for a special toy, an animal, or a plant.
- 6-10
 - Participate in family service activities.
 - Teach your child about people who value and model integrity.
 - Together write thank-you notes whenever your child receives a gift.
- 11-15
 - Watch television or read books together and discuss the values presented.
 - Together interact in caring, responsible ways with younger children.
 - Build a bird feeder together and have your young teen keep it filled with bird food.
- 16-18
 - Agree that you'll disagree respectfully.
 - Encourage your teenager to volunteer with at least one organization.
 - Together write letters to Congress advocating for or against pending legislation.

Values help children grow into independent, confident, caring people. What are your family values? Here are a few possibilities to get you started. Add other ideas and determine which 10 values are most important to your family.

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Honesty | <input type="checkbox"/> Moderation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Love | <input type="checkbox"/> Friendliness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loyalty | <input type="checkbox"/> Promise keeping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Equality | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-reliance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Devotion | <input type="checkbox"/> Social justice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Responsibility | <input type="checkbox"/> Sensitivity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Respect | <input type="checkbox"/> Mercy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dependability | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-discipline |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kindness | <input type="checkbox"/> Peacemaking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self-control | <input type="checkbox"/> Courage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compassion | |

More Help for Parents

Teaching Your Children Values by Linda Eyre and Richard Eyre. This book provides age-appropriate ideas on how to help your child develop values. (Published by Fireside.)

FINAL WORD

“When we perform acts of kindness, we get a wonderful feeling inside.”

—Rabbi Harold Kushner, Ph.D.

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