

# Common Sense Rules for Parents on Developing Non-aggressive, Independent Children



Taken from the US Department of Health and Human Services- SAMHSA' National Mental Health Information Center

Much research on family conditions and the upbringing of children has led to this important conclusion:

**A lot of love and involvement from the people bringing up children, clear limits for what behavior is allowed and not allowed, as well as the use of nonviolent methods of upbringing, creates non-aggressive, harmonious, and independent children.**

Here are some common sense rules for parents/caregivers who want to help children have a positive childhood:

- **Remember that you are a role model for your child.** Your child is bonded with you in the deepest love and admiration. That is why he or she wants to be like you, at least when he or she is young. Whatever you do, your child will do. Whatever you say or believe, your child will repeat.
- **Do not frighten your child unnecessarily.** Sometimes you may need to scare your child to keep him or her away from dangerous situations, but children should not be scared into obedience. Spare your child upsetting knowledge about things he or she cannot do anything about.
- **Let your child feel he or she is important.** Children have a great need to feel they are important to their parents. Children grow on love and challenges.
- **Laugh with and not at your child.** Children are proud and can be deeply hurt when they feel you are making fun of them. Laugh with your child; humor is positive.
- **Do not give in to your child to avoid conflict.** Children feel more secure when they have limits set for them in their everyday life, but they often cannot refrain from testing their limits.
- **Keep the agreements you make with your children.** Children feel helpless if you break agreements without good reason. If your child isn't sure whether he or she can rely on you, whom can he or she rely on? Remember that what you do today contributes to forming the future.
- **Praise your child frequently.** Encouragement and kind words motivate a child to cooperate. Positive support strengthens the child's self-image and creates an enthusiastic spirit. When new challenges arise, your child will be able to meet them confidently.

# Ways to Show Kids You Care!

From the Search Institute

- Notice them
- Smile a lot
- Acknowledge them
- Seek them out
- Ask them about themselves
- Look in their eyes when you talk to them
- Play with them
- Read aloud together
- Giggle together
- Tell them their feelings are okay
- Set boundaries that keep them safe
- Encourage them to help others



- Applaud their successes
- Help them learn something new
- Become their advocate
- Appreciate their individuality
- Trust them
- Be available
- Give choices
- Do what they like to do
- Help them learn from mistakes
- Be sincere
- Expect the best; not perfection

***Love them, no matter what!***