



SPRING



The L.B.J. & C. Head Start Headliner

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TEN WAYS TO BE A GREAT DAD

1. Respect your child's mother.

If you are married, keep your marriage strong and vital. If you aren't married, it is still important to respect and support the mother of your children.

2. Spend time with your children.

How a father spends his time tells his children what's important to him. By sharing time with your children, you tell them they are important to you.

3. Earn the right to be heard.

As parents we often speak to our children when they have done something wrong. Begin talking with your kids when they are young, praise them and take time to listen to their ideas and concerns.

4. Discipline with love.

All children need guidance and discipline, not as punishment, but to set reasonable limits. Remind your children of the consequences of their actions and provide meaningful rewards for good behavior.



5. Read to your children.

Begin reading to your children when they are very young. Instilling your children with a love for reading is one of the best ways to ensure they will have a lifetime of personal and career growth.

6. Show affection.

Children need the security that comes from knowing they are wanted and loved by their family. Parents need to feel comfortable and willing to hug their children. Showing affection and love every day is the

best way to let your children know that you love them.

7. Eat together as a family.

Sharing a meal together can be an important part of family life. It gives kids the chance to talk about what they are doing and is a good time for fathers to listen and give advice.

8. Be a teacher and a role model.

A father will see his children make good choices because he has taught them about right and wrong and encouraged them to do their best. By demonstrating honesty, humility and responsibility, fathers can show their children what is important in life. Children who grows up with a loving father learn that they deserves to be treated with respect.

9. Realize that a father's job is never done.

Even after children are grown and leave the home, they will still look to their fathers for wisdom and advice. Fathers continue to play an essential part in the lives of their children as they make decisions about education, jobs, marriage and starting their own families.

10. Reach out to other parents for support.

Discuss parenting with other parents - both moms and dads. Share ideas, solve problems, find out what other parents are doing to tackle issues of discipline, safety, and communication. Get to know the parents of your kid's friends. Consider joining or starting a dads' group in your area. You can learn a lot, find support and camaraderie and enjoy parenting more when you are friends with other parents.

Source: www.onetoughjob.org

10 Things You Can Do To Have a Healthy Marriage

It takes work to have a healthy marriage but it is possible. Just like good nutrition and regular exercise can help you have a healthy body, there are things you can do to have a healthy marriage.

Here are 10 Tips you can use to strengthen your marriage:

1. **Spend Time with Each Other.** Married partners need time with each other in order to grow strong together. Plan regularly scheduled date nights and weekend activities. If a getaway is not immediately possible make it a goal that you will work toward. By spending time with your partner, you will better understand your differences and how to negotiate the problems they may cause. Forget the “quality vs. quantity time” discussion—healthy marriages need both.
2. **Learn to Negotiate Conflict.** Conflict is a normal part of a relationship. There is a point however when it can increase in intensity and become emotionally and sometimes physically unsafe. Working out problems in a relationship starts with understanding what your issues are and how to discuss them. There are many resources available to help you learn how to deal with conflict. Using these resources can go a long way in preserving how safe you and your partner feel.
3. **Show Respect for Each Other at All Times.** When a couple fails to respect each other they often slip into negative habits. Research shows that nothing can damage a relationship quicker than criticisms and put-downs. Treating your partner as you would like to be treated will do a lot to strengthen the bond between you. Paying your partner a compliment is a quick and easy way to show them respect. When you are tempted to complain to someone about one of your partner’s flaws, ask yourself how you would feel if they did that to you.
4. **Learn About Yourself First.** Make it a point to work on self discovery. Many partners enter into relationships without knowing enough about themselves. As a result they can also have difficulty learning about their partners. Learning about yourself will better equip you to grow as an individual and a partner. Regardless how long you’ve been together, there are always more things you can learn about him or her. What are his dreams for the future? What is her worst fear? What is the way he or she best gives or receives love? Imagine the intimacy and bond you will share over a lifetime together if you commit to discovering new things about one another!
5. **Explore Intimacy.** Marital intimacy can open your relationship to a whole new level of enjoyment and closeness. It is important, however, to remember that intimacy does not always mean sexuality. An often forgotten aspect of intimacy is the emotional type. An example of emotional intimacy is creating a safe space for your partner to share his or her emotions without fear of you being judgmental or making light of them. Learn the difference between emotional and physical intimacy and when each one is most appropriate. Offering your partner one type when they really need the other can create problems in your relationship.
6. **Explore Common Interests.** Couples thrive when they share similar interests. That doesn’t necessarily mean each partner will enjoy every activity but it opens up the opportunity for greater sharing and compromise. Doing things separately is not bad but common interests are important to healthy marriages. A common interest may be cooking or eating new foods together, going for walks or playing cards. The goal is to have something outside of your family that you both enjoy.
7. **Create a Spiritual Connection.** Many couples grow closer when they share some form of spiritual connection. This can be done in many different ways. For example it may be achieved through an affiliation with a church, synagogue or mosque, through meditation or by simply spending time in nature or intimate conversation.
8. **Improve Your Communication Skills.** The ability to talk and listen to each other is one key to a healthy marriage. You should never assume your partner knows what you are thinking or feeling. Tell your spouse what is going on—and as a spouse, know when to simply listen. Learning to really hear your partner is a skill that may require practice. There are many resources available like books, marriage education workshops and online courses. All of these options can help couples learn how to communicate more effectively.
9. **Forgive Each Other.** If he or she hasn’t already, your partner is going to do something that hurts, frustrates or upsets you. Guess what, you are going to do the same thing! Sometimes it might even be on purpose after an argument or misunderstanding. Forgiveness is a tricky but important virtue in a marriage especially since no one is perfect. Try to allow your partner some room to make a few mistakes because you will also make some of your own. When you make a mistake, act quickly to apologize and fix problems. Doing so will help to encourage forgiveness and strengthen your marriage.
10. **Look for the Best in Each Other.** When you met your partner, you fell in love with some of his or her wonderful qualities. Over time however, your view of those qualities may have changed. For example, he may have been really good at saving money when you met. Now you just think he’s cheap! Give each other the benefit of the doubt and create a list of all the things you love about your partner. It will help you to fall in love all over again!

Thank you to David Jones, a Certified Family Life Educator and author of a variety of relationship tools for fathers, for contributing to this tip sheet.

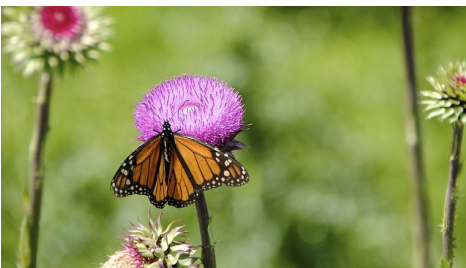
Disclaimer: These tips are designed to assist couples in improving their relationships however they are not meant to be a substitute for professional help and advice.

Source: National Healthy Marriage Resource Center

Top Ten Tips for the Transition to Kindergarten

1. Help yourself first. We can be more helpful to our children if we acknowledge the ways in which this transition is a big life step for us, as well. Think about what will help us through this developmental event: information, support, networking, etc.
2. Say goodbyes before concentrating on hellos. Whether your child has been in preschool, child care, or at home with you, help him/her say goodbye to that familiar situation. Review her recent past experiences by looking at photos or helping her make memory books. Talk about what he most enjoyed, what he will miss, and how much he has grown. Point out ways you can help her stay in touch with important people.
3. Try to identify your child's big concerns about starting kindergarten. Is he worrying about not making new friends? Is she wondering about where the bathrooms will be? Investigate these concerns through your special knowledge of your child. Pay attention to what he/she is saying. Ask open-ended questions: "Sometimes children wonder what the teacher will be like. What do you wonder about?" Ease fears by talking about specifics such as drop-off and pick-up routines.
4. Think about how much advance preparation your child usually needs for big life changes. Some children need a lot more preparation than others. And children address big issues in little bits and pieces spread out over time—a few sentences here, a few questions there—and not in one big conversation.
5. Concentrate on building "bridges" between the old, familiar experience and the new, unfamiliar experience. For example, as kindergarten gets closer, you may be able to get a class list. If so, contact a few families about setting up one-on-one playdates before school starts. Visit the school if you can; if not, walk around the outside, peak inside the windows, and play on the playground. Let your child take photos.
6. Use your child's imagination. Play school. Read books about kindergarten. Make up your own stories or create a puppet show about going to school.
7. Acknowledge and support feelings, especially mixed feelings. Tell your own stories about your kindergarten and early school experiences. Stay positive, but don't be afraid to share anecdotes about minor missteps that ended well. You may also acknowledge your own mixed feelings about the transition: "You've grown up so fast, it's hard for me to believe that you're not a little baby anymore. You're ready for big-kid school!"
8. Encourage self-care skills. Being able to wash hands, use the bathroom successfully, dress, zip up a jacket, and so on not only increases your child's self-esteem; feeling secure about these skills will give him/her one less thing to worry about in kindergarten.
9. Expect stress. Limit other transitions when possible. Plan and put into effect a kindergarten routine for your child: Select and lay out school clothes each night, get the backpack ready for the morning, choose a reasonable bedtime, and so on.
10. Maintain a sympathetic yet positive attitude: "I know this life change has some big challenges in it, and I also know that you can learn to do it and have a great time. I have faith in you, and I'm here to help you—and so is your teacher!"

Source: www.mspp.edu/community/freedman-center/top10tips-kindergarten.php (Author: Debbie Weinstock-Savoy, Ph.D., is a Freedman Center Presenter, licensed psychologist, and the mother of three children. She has over twenty years of experience consulting with parents and educators.)



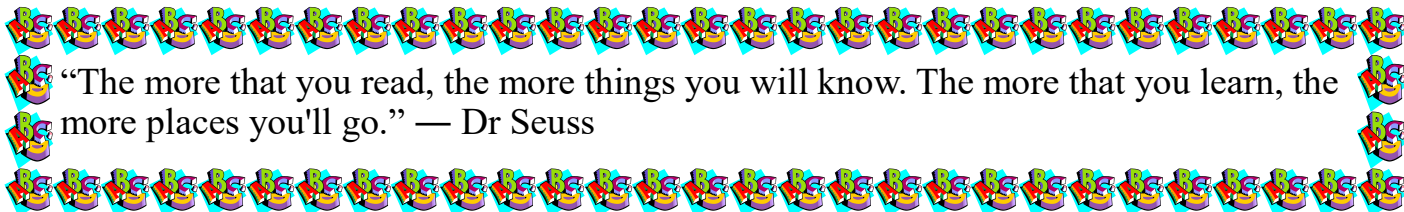
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Are You interested in getting your GED? Contact your T/TA Representative at your local center. Continuing education opportunities are available. College? Start Today!! It is never too late to learn.




“The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.” — Dr Seuss



HEY, PARENTS!



- Go on a walk or bike ride. Observe the natural world as you make your way through the woods or park.
- Senses walk: Use all of your senses to experience spring. Smell the flowers or grass. Listen to birds chirping. Feel the smoothness or roughness of a rock.
- Shape scavenger hunt: Look closely and you'll find shapes all around you. Bonus points for spotting 3D shapes such as a cube, cylinder or sphere.
- Color walk: Find items for every color in the rainbow (remember it's ROYGBIV).



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