

Positive+Parent™ Newsletter

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DO YOU WANT TO TEACH YOUR KIDS RESPECT?

“A youth is to be regarded with respect. How do you know that his future will not be equal to our present?”

- Confucius

I am sure you know of some families where the kids are always provoking each other. When one kid says something another has to tell them that they are wrong or just put them down.

There are even some families where the kids are insulting at the parents and putting the parents down for things that they say.

Guess how much fun it is to be around these families. I sometimes wonder how the parents put up with it!

Now I cannot say what the parents in these families did or did not do, but I do know that this NEVER happens in my family and I have an idea why.

My wife and I were talking recently about our kids. (Okay, we always talk about our kids, but that is besides the point!) We noticed that our kids are always respectful to us and to each other. They often play around with each other and even wrestle sometimes. There are even tears occasionally when our 11 year old takes on his 20 year old brother – but our oldest son never intends to hurt the little one, it just happens during the play.

My wife and I were wondering what we “did right”. My theory is that we always showed them respect.

What exactly is respect? Part of it is that we often

asked their opinion and then took it into consideration. If we did not take their advice we explained why. When I made mistakes with my kids, I apologized. I let them know that their feelings are important, that I value their feelings and that I was sorry that I had hurt their feelings. And there were times I punished my kids or “forced” them to do things they did not want to do. That is part of parenting. But, again, I made sure they knew that their feelings and opinions were important, but that in this case I had to overrule them.

I guess the simplest way to make a long story short is that I valued my kids and made sure they knew it.

Another VERY important way to model respect for your kids is to respect your spouse. Do you listen to your spouse's opinion? Do you interrupt? Do you help and support your spouse, not only around the house but with their own work?

What is the outcome of all this? I see two outcomes. Firstly, your child will learn to respect others. They will respect their teachers, they will respect other adults,

and they will respect their friends. The outcome of this is that all these people will, in turn, respect your child.

But there is a MUCH more important outcome. Your child will have self-respect. A person who has self-respect is positive, pleasant and takes care of themselves. A person with self-respect most likely will not have addiction problems.

Self-respect is so important. Teach your child self-respect by respecting them!

