



the family values toolkit

For Children Ages 8 to 10

This Month's Featured Value Is: **Respect**

Respect refers to the belief that other people have as much worth and dignity as oneself, and deserve to be treated with care and courtesy. A person can also feel respect for property, institutions, relationships, and the environment. While respect is often equated with good manners, the core of the behavior goes deeper than politeness. It stems from the feeling that harming others, trampling on their rights, and defacing property are inherently wrong.



What Can Parents Do to Nurture This Important Value?

First, Set Goals:

Help kids overcome mixed messages about respectfulness they may be receiving from pop culture.

As children get older, they receive mixed messages about respect. The media have a lot to do with this. While parents may urge kids to respect others' feelings, movies portray putdowns and body noises as funny; while teachers convey lessons about tolerance, TV shows abound with off-color jokes and demeaning sexual stereotypes. Adults can also be negative role models if they speak rudely to a waiter, curse at slow drivers, or treat their own parents disrespectfully. It's not easy for children to sort out these messages, but parents can start by modeling proper behavior at home, for instance speaking to service people and older members of your family politely and with respect.

Next, Take Action! Try These Activities:

- ✓ **Watch TV with your child and comment on rude or intolerant characters**, saying, "That man doesn't respect his wife--that would be unacceptable behavior in our house."
- ✓ **Play "How'd You Like It If?"** This game lets kids role play respectful--and disrespectful--characters in various scenarios that deal with treating others right. Have one family member play the role of the "disrespector" (perhaps borrowing another's property without permission or talking back to an elder), while the others act out how it feels to be disrespected. Then switch places and have the "disrespector" be the "disrespected." Afterward, have everyone talk together about what happened.
- ✓ **Have a "fancy restaurant" night at home.** Set the table with tablecloth and cloth napkins, good dishes, and candlelight. Have everyone use their best table manners, as if you were dining with royalty. Show kids how to give a toast, help adults to their seats, wait for everyone to be served. Really ham it up! The lessons will stick.

Then, Report Back!

Share your stories of success, your challenges, and overall experiences with others in our community @

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