

# **75 ANSWERS TO YOUR BIGGEST PARENTING QUESTIONS**

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- 1. How should I deal with my child being a bully?** It is important to realize that nearly one in ten children are victimized by bullies and that bullying is a very serious problem that should not be taken lightly. Start by determining how your child is bullying others. The most common type of bullying is physical; punching, pushing, kicking, etc. However, a child may be teasing other children, calling them names or otherwise verbally assaulting them. Once you have determined the type of bullying, you need to make it completely clear to your child that the behavior is unacceptable. Then, you need to find out the reason that your child has become a bully. Talking to your child may lead to him or her giving you an explanation, however in many cases it is a good idea to involve a professional counselor who is specially trained to work with bullying children.
- 2. What should I do when another child bully's mine?** So many parents tell their children to ignore bullies, and to look the other way rather than react. However, it is never advisable to let bullying go, because it will never just "go away". In some cases, it may not even be apparent to you that your child is being bullied because bullied children are often afraid to tell an adult what is happening. When you suspect that bullying is an issue, talk to your child and school officials. Getting the teachers and school administrators involved will make them aware of the problem and you can work together to find a solution.
- 3. How can I talk openly with my child about death?** The first thing to remember is that death is a part of life, and that everyone will experience loss and grief at some time. Generally, children who are of school age will have an understanding that death is permanent, however pre-schoolers and younger children may not quite get that their loved one will never come back. You must always be honest and open when discussing death, and more than anything else you need to make sure that your child understands that he or she should and can talk to you or another trusted adult about their feelings at any time.
- 4. How do I tell my child that someone has died?** The most important rule of thumb is to BE HONEST. Never tell your child that their loved one is sleeping – or they will expect him or her to wake up. And, never tell your child that their loved one is "taking a trip or journey" because they will await a return. Unless you are honest and open, there is most likely going to be a delay between your child learning about the death and the onset of the grieving process.
- 5. What can I do to help my young child face the fear of death?** It's not uncommon for young children to be frightened by death because they do not understand the process. When you are open and honest, it should help to alleviate some of this fear. When explaining death, tell your child that the deceased was so old that their body stopped working, or that they were sick or injured and their body stopped working. Spare them the details, because they won't understand and the details can be frightening to them. Once the reality sets in, it is very likely that your child will ask

you if you are going to die too. A good way to answer is to explain that everyone will die eventually, but that most of the time people do not die until they are very old.

- 6. How am I best to handle the death of my child's pet?** Chances are that if you have had your pet for some time, your child is very attached to the animal. Remember that just because your pet is not a person, it is still very possible for your child to have developed a strong attachment. When the pet dies, your child is just as likely to suffer from grief as they would be if a loved one had died. Be open and honest with your child – regardless of his or her age.
- 7. How can I deal with a child that is shorter than other kids his age?** Children all grow at different rates and there always seems to be that one child who is behind the others. If your child comes from a family of normal height, it is most likely just a matter of delayed growth so rest assured that he will catch up eventually. If there are existing medical problems, or hormonal deficiencies, it is possible that your child will remain short. You should talk to your pediatrician to have tests done if you have concerns about your child's size.
- 8. What should I do to stop my child's lying?** Young children do not know the difference between right and wrong and fantasy and reality. So, why would you expect them to know the difference between the truth and a lie? The best way to handle lying is to start at a very young age, impressing upon your child that the most important rule is that they always tell you the truth. You should explain to your child the reasons why lying is a bad behavior – and never let your child go unpunished when you catch them in a lie. It is important to be consistent, and to let your child know that lying is NEVER acceptable. And be sure to reinforce this by setting a good example. You can't expect your child to listen to you if you're caught in a lie!
- 9. How do I know when it is ok to leave my child alone?** A general rule of thumb is to not leave your children home alone until they are at least eleven years old. However, some children are perfectly fine for a short time period at ten, and there are some teens that still require constant supervision and cannot be left alone. The best way to determine whether or not your child is ready to be left alone is to talk to your child to see if he or she knows what to do when faced with different situations. Does your child realize that he or she should never open the door when you are not home? Would they know what to do in the case of an emergency? If you are confident, begin by leaving your child for only a few minutes while you run to the corner store, or visit a neighbor. After several short periods, you can leave your child for an hour or so to see how he or she does on their own. Only when you feel confident should you leave your child alone for extended periods of time.
- 10. How can I help my child make new friends?** Some parents become overly concerned when their school aged child is more interested in spending time alone than he is in spending time with his peers. Know that this is not uncommon, and that many children simply prefer alone time to social groups until they get close to the teen years. However, if you suspect that the reason your child is having problems

making friends is because of a personality issue then you should start addressing it as soon as possible. Figure out what the problem is, whether it is because your child is bossy, hyper, cannot follow the rules or if the problem is poor self control. Once you determine if there is a problem, you will be close to a solution.

- 11. How can I help my child develop self-esteem?** Some children seem to be born with a high self-esteem. Yet others seem to continuously struggle through childhood with a very low self-esteem. Somewhere in between lies a balance, and that is what most parents hope to help their children achieve. If you want your child to have a healthy sense of self-esteem, you need to give him or her positive feedback at every opportunity. You can do this by providing your child with the chance to participate in activities where they are able to excel. Then be sure to celebrate your child's accomplishments, even the small ones.
- 12. What can I do to make sure my child is eating healthy?** It is easy to make sure that your pre-schooler is eating healthy because you're responsible for all of their meals and snacks. The difficulty begins when your child starts school, and you no longer have control over what they are eating and when. If you start teaching your child how to make healthy food choices from an early age, you are setting your child up for a lifetime of healthy eating habits. Keep plenty of fruits and vegetables on hand for healthy snacking, and restrict refined sugar as much as possible from day one.
- 13. How should I deal with a picky eater?** Young children will frequently become picky eaters, or go through phases where they want to eat only specific types of foods. This is really nothing to be concerned about. These phases tend to come and go and unless they last for an extended period of time there is little chance of them becoming problematic. As long as your child is healthy overall and is within a normal weight and height range, your pediatrician will most likely tell you to just wait out the phase and not worry. Pay attention to what your child is eating over the course of a week or month, and you are likely to discover that she is eating a healthy diet in the long run.
- 14. How do I decide whether to give my child vitamins?** A good multi-vitamin is a smart choice for children and adults. Many of the vitamins and minerals our bodies need are not easily absorbed from the foods we eat. So supplementing is a good idea. There are many different varieties, containing different combinations. You should opt for a children's formula, and consider asking your pediatrician for a recommendation.
- 15. How should I deal with a child who will not eat three meals a day?** Understanding and patience are your best allies in this situation. As any pediatrician will tell you, it is very common for young children to eat only one or two full meals over the course of a day. Instead of eating the rest of their food in sit down meals, they often tend to "graze" on smaller portions throughout the day. This may be because your child does not need as much food as you're assuming. The average toddler only needs a few tablespoons at each meal. To make sure your child is getting enough to eat, help her

to make healthy choices throughout the day by keeping on hand baskets of fresh fruits, cut up vegetables and other healthy snacks in portioned containers.

**16. How can I get my child to try new foods?** Every parent dreams of having a child who is willing to eat just about anything. However, most wake up to the nightmare of children who are quite restrictive in the foods that they will eat without an argument. The solution starts with the first foods that you feed your infant, and continues throughout your child's early years. Some parents will have a rule that their children must try one bite of every food being served. Other parents concentrate on providing a large variety of tasty foods, hoping that their children will start to try new things. Either route is a good idea, it really just depends on whether you are bothered by a picky child. The other alternative is to wait it out, knowing that in most cases, a picky child will grow up to be an adult who is willing to eat most foods.

**17. How can I decide which vaccines my child should receive?** In most cases, your child should be immunized according to the American Academy of Pediatrics immunization schedule, because this is the list of immunizations that most schools require for admission. There are some cases where for medical or religious reasons, a parent will decide not to immunize. But, honestly unless there is a very good reason NOT to immunize, it is best to make sure that your child is protected.

**18. How can I use reverse psychology to make my child do what I want him to?** Some people believe that using reverse psychology on a child is a control mechanism, and others consider it a valuable method of persuasion. Either way, the idea behind reverse psychology is to tell your child that you want him or her to do one thing, and expecting that they will do exactly the opposite. This is useful when trying to get a young child to eat, saying "don't you DARE eat that corn!" will inevitably result in the child eating the corn. Be careful when you try to use this technique with older children, who are most likely well aware of what you are trying to do.

**19. How can I help my teething child?** Teething is one of those things that most first-time parents fear. A teething child will spend time going back and forth between cranky and miserable and this definitely takes a toll on both the child and the parents. To ease the pain of teething, consider giving your child a cold, wet washcloth to suck on. This will ease the pain and distract the child. If your child is older than six months, you can consider giving Children's Tylenol or Children's Motrin. Most pediatricians advise that you stay away from numbing agents, which can reduce the suckling instinct and reduce the amount that your child will eat while they are teething. If your child is running a fever, or has a runny nose, it is probably a sign that something else is happening because these are not signs of teething.

**20. What should I do to teach my young child about money?** Open a bank of your own! This gives you the ability to teach your children about money management without giving your child cash that they can spend frivolously or lose. The process is simple. Set up a spreadsheet on your computer that will serve as the bank register. Give your child an old checkbook, or make up some checks with the child's name on

them. When your child wants spending money, they will ‘withdraw’ it from their account. At the end of every week, you will ‘deposit’ your child’s allowance into the account instead of handing the child cash that can be lost or misplaced. This is a great way to keep track of your child’s spending habits and to ensure that your child isn’t losing money or spending it all on things that you would prefer they didn’t have.

- 21. How can I stop struggling with my older child?** Struggles of will are common between parents and older children, who want independence and try to push limits wherever they can. The key here is to pick the battles that you feel are worth fighting. For example, if you are not willing to negotiate over your child wearing a coat in the winter you need to make that perfectly clear. You might offer to negotiate over gloves and other cold weather gear however. *Never give your child the option of not wearing a head covering to prevent the loss of body heat!* In some cases, such struggles become heated and emotional and as a parent you need to keep your cool and be firm and consistent with your children.
- 22. How can I set up successful play dates for my child?** Two’s company and three’s a crowd. This is important, and most parents do not realize this until it happens in front of them. Young children already have some anxiety over sharing their playthings, so it is better not to invite more than one child over to play at a time. As your child gets older, it will be ok to incorporate additional playmates in your play dates, but a toddler will definitely enjoy their friends better one at a time. If you feel an inclination to invite multiple kids, then do so in even numbers including your child. Two, four or even six children at a time may be ok as long as each pair of kids seems to form a common interest.
- 23. What should I do to encourage my child to read?** Young children and babies need to see and hear you reading to them from the very beginning so that they can develop language skills. But, school aged children are less inclined to sit and have you read a book to them. You will want to make sure that they are spending time reading books however, because they need to practice reading to become effective at it. Interact with your young children when reading to them. Have them point out things in the book, or predict what will come next. When your kids start reading chapter books that are short in length, read the book so that you are prepared to ask them about what they are reading, and to determine if they are getting a grasp on the content. Teach your children from a young age that reading is enjoyable and fun and that there are books available on every topic, so there is truly a book out there for everyone!
- 24. How should I prepare my child for first day of school anxiety?** One of the best possible situations for a first day of school is having your child walk into the room already knowing some of the other students. You can call the school in advance and ask for the names and phone numbers of other parents so that you can arrange a meeting between the children prior to the start of classes. You can also help to reduce first day anxiety by sending a special little note or sticker in your child’s lunch so that she knows you are thinking about her while she is not at home.

**25. How can I stay on top of trends?** When it comes to fads and trends, the one consistency is change. What your child is begging for one day, he will be scoffing at the next. As a parent, you will need to make sure that your child does not ‘fall behind the time’, while showing them that not every fad is worth following. It is important to be clear with your reasons when you tell your child that they cannot have a specific item. And, you need to make sure that you do allow your child to follow some fads that don’t pose a significant problem. Some parents will give in and allow their children to wear some of the more questionable teen fashions, while other parents will give in on video game trends. Still other parents will give their children the latest electronic devices. Today’s big question is whether or not children should have their own cell phones, a trend that is increasing among pre-teens and teens alike. It’s a matter of personal choice – but you will need to instill limits with your children right from the beginning.

**26. What should I do to get my toddler to color inside the lines?** The short answer is, you don’t. Children need to feel free to express their creativity, and for younger children this often means coloring outside the lines and scribbling. Never criticize your young Picasso when he or she doesn’t do a perfect coloring job, because in most cases they are doing the best job they can! Instead hang their artwork on the refrigerator or frame it to give them a sense of accomplishment. Fine motor skill development takes several years, and it is literally impossible for most children to control their crayons to the point where they color like an expert. So, be patient and your child will soon be creating masterpieces!

**27. How can I throw a successful birthday party for my young child?** Young children function best in small groups. Therefore you should invite only a few children to attend a party in your child’s honor. After all, until your child is of school age the party is really for you and your family! A party for a young child should last only an hour or two, so that the children do not become restless, tired and develop separation anxiety. Serve healthy snacks and plan activities to keep the kids busy for most of the party time. Always enlist help, because young children need to be supervised and you will appreciate the adult companionship as well!

**28. How can I get my shy child to interact with other kids?** In some cases, a shy child will outgrow their shyness as they get older. However, with most shy children there will always be a high degree of sensitivity that needs to be respected and recognized. Putting a shy child into a preschool program might help to get them out of their shell – but try to avoid putting your younger child into organized activities with the hope of drawing them into the social scene. This can cause more anxiety than anything. Introduce your child to new activities and people slowly and always talk to the child before putting him or her into a new situation.

**29. How can I teach my child what to do in case of fire?** Fire safety is one of the most important things that a child should learn from a young age. The first thing to tell your child is “stop, drop and roll”. This mantra will stick with them throughout their lifetime. Second, you should teach your child that if there is a fire they need to get

the attention of ANY adult by yelling “Fire” and not “Help”. Finally, teach them to get outside and to run to a neighbor’s home to call 911. Arranging a meeting place where you can check to see that all family members got to safety.

**30. How can I teach my child what to do in an emergency?** Teaching your young child to dial 911, and explaining repeatedly that the number is only for use in a serious emergency is a good start. Older children will understand that they should only call 911 if their parent is unconscious or they are alone in the home. In addition to knowing how to call 911, even young children should learn their home address and phone number along with the full names of their parents. Remind your child that staying calm in an emergency is the most effective way to make clear judgments, but keep your own expectations realistic and know that children will panic. If you are leaving your child alone for an extended period of time, ask a trusted adult to check in on them occasionally.

**31. What should I do to keep my child safe around water?** All children need to know about the dangers of water and drowning. If you have a backyard swimming pool, put up a fence and raise the ladder if possible. A pool alarm is inexpensive and takes only a few minutes to install. Never allow your child to swim, or be near water, alone and be sure to teach them about the buddy system. These are lessons that will stick with them through their life and allow them to always be safe around water. Finally, enroll your child in swimming lessons. Neighborhood pools and schools often provide these. Knowing how to swim is the best defense against drowning or being injured in the water.

**32. How can I keep my child safe around a hot tub?** More and more families are installing hot tubs in and around their homes. Because of the shallow depth, many people overlook the importance of covers. Don’t make this mistake. Use a cover with a lock every time you get out of the hot tub. When children use the hot tub, it is important to let them in the water for only a few moments at a time, because the elevated water temperature can be dangerous for young bodies and lead to burns or dehydration. As with all dangerous household items, keep your hot tub chemicals under lock and key, because they can be very harmful if ingested or spilled.

**33. How can I keep my child safe on the playground?** Never allow your child to use playground equipment that is in need of repair. And, unless the equipment is placed on a base of mulch or rubber padding of at least 12 inches there is a significant risk of injury resulting from falls. Never leave your child alone at the playground, because if they should become injured you need to be there to assist them. Teach your child that pushing other children on the equipment is absolutely unacceptable, and do not allow other children to push your child either.

**34. How can I keep my child safe when playing inside?** You should never allow your child to run in the house because injuries can occur due to stairs and falls. And many parents have made a clear distinction between indoor and outdoor toys in order to avoid children throwing balls and other objects in the house. If you allow your child

to play hide and seek inside of the house, make sure that they understand that freezers and refrigerators are off limits, along with other potentially hazardous locations such as storage closets that are used for chemicals or cleaning products. Have plenty of indoor friendly toys, games and activities available for young children in order to keep them safe inside your home.

- 35. What should I do to keep my child safe from poisons?** The first rule of thumb for parents is to keep cleaning products and other chemicals out of the reach of children. This may be on a high shelf or in a locked cupboard. It also means not using your medicine cabinet for medication storage. Keep medications out of the view and reach of children at all times. Have the poison control number handy by every phone in the house in case of accidental ingestion, and never induce vomiting until you have spoken with a professional.
- 36. How can I keep my child safe when there are firearms in the home?** The best option is simply to not have firearms in the home. But, if you must have them you should always keep them in a locked cabinet. Keep ammunition locked in a different location and NEVER tell your child where it is kept. Teach your children about firearms, and the dangers that they pose. Be honest with your child, because curiosity results in more firearms injuries than anything else. Toy guns are a bad idea, and if your child asks for a BB gun, dart gun or other firearm toy – tell them no.
- 37. What can I do to teach my child to leave houseplants alone?** There are many varieties of houseplants that are poisonous to children and animals, so be aware of what types of plants you are growing in your home. If you know that a specific plant is dangerous, keep it well out of the reach of your child. Knowing what is growing in your home is important, because if your child should eat a piece of your plant and become ill – you will need to tell the poison control center or pediatrician exactly what the child ate that made them ill.
- 38. How will I know when it's time to move my toddler out of his crib?** Once they reach 30 inches tall, children should be moved out of their crib and into a bed. This is a safety concern, because taller children are prone to falling over the edge of crib rails. If you are worried that your child will fall out of a bed, use a guardrail. There are many options available, and the best is a rail that slides between the mattress and box spring for stabilization. Another option is a toddler bed, which places your child just a few inches off of the floor.
- 39. How would I know if my home contained lead paint?** Any home that was built before 1978 could potentially contain lead based paint. Intact paint that is not peeling in any location is most likely not a hazard, however if your home is older and has peeling walls you will need to be aware of the dangers of lead poisoning. If you suspect that your home contains lead-based paint, you can request that a certified lead inspector perform tests to determine whether there is lead present and give you advice on what you need to do in order to keep your child safe.

- 40. How can I prevent staircase injuries?** The best way to prevent your child from falling down stairs is to keep them away from the top. You should have a door, or locking gate in place on all staircases when your child is young. Teach your child to navigate stairs correctly as soon as he or she is crawling in order to make sure that they know how to go up and down should they find themselves on the stairs. Don't allow your children of any age to run in the house, otherwise an accidental stair fall could result.
- 41. How can I celebrate the successes of parenthood?** Many parents do not take the time to celebrate the things that they are doing right as parents. This is important, because everyone needs to be recognized. Take a few minutes to look in the mirror and reflect on how far you have come with your children. And, thank yourself for a job well done, because no one benefits from well-raised children as much as the parents.
- 42. How can I become comfortable using a babysitter?** First-time parents particularly become uncomfortable at the mention of the word. However, everyone needs an occasional break from parenthood and babysitters are often necessary to make it happen! Ask for recommendations from friends and neighbors and even your church, and feel confident knowing that if someone else is willing to entrust their children's welfare to a babysitter – you can too. Start small, using a new babysitter for an hour while you run to the grocery store. Increase the time that you will be away gradually and watch how your children interact with the sitter. Over time, you will become more comfortable leaving your children with a babysitter.
- 43. How do I decide whether to let my child sleep with me?** The decision of whether or not to allow a child into the parental bed for night-time sleeping is a completely individual decision. Just know that once you begin to allow your child into your bed, they will be much less inclined to fall asleep on their own. Therefore, decide early whether you are willing to sleep with your child every night. Some parents have discovered that infants in the parental bed make nighttime feedings easier. However, others have determined that putting the infant's bassinet near the parents' bed has the same effect.
- 44. What are some ways I can make my child's room enjoyable for me?** Many new parents forget that they will be spending a lot of time in their infant's room. Therefore, decorate the room for your tastes and with a décor that is welcoming to you. If you place a comfortable rocker with soft pillows and a warm blanket in the room, you will find it a lot more enjoyable than if it contains only a crib and dresser. Realize that you will spend time in this room when changing your baby, putting him or her to sleep and even when he or she is sick.
- 45. How can I teach my child to be a good sport?** Nobody likes a sore loser. The best way to teach a child to be a good sport is to practice good sportsmanship yourself. If you are overly competitive, your child will pick up on this and emulate your behavior. If your child is going to play organized sports, be realistic about your expectations

and never yell or scream at an official that you think was unfair to your child. Be consistent. If you see your child do something that is not sportsmanlike – correct the behavior and discuss it with your child after the game or activity has ended.

- 46. How can I stop my child from being unsportsmanlike?** If you see your child acting in an unsportsmanlike way on or off the field, it is important to point out the behavior and ask your child point-blank why it is that they would behave in such a way. When the child gives you the reason for their behavior, be understanding and listen. Keep an open mind also, because sometimes what seems like an unsportsmanlike behavior may actually be a reaction to another behavior that you missed. For example, your child may shove another child in order to get the other child to stop kicking him or her. Keep the lines of communication open, and make your expectations perfectly clear to your child.
- 47. What are some ways I can play with an uninterested child?** Some young children, from the time of infancy, prefer little to no interaction and stimulation from their parents and siblings. It is important to never give up and start ignoring the child, because children crave and need attention regardless of how they react. Find out what it is that your child likes, and share those things with the child. If your quiet child prefers to read alone – then read right along with them in your own book. Finding experiences for bonding on the child's terms will help to open the child up to being able to participate in other forms of interaction.
- 48. What are some ways to get my child to stop being a sore loser?** If your child is a sore loser, then you need to talk to the child and make your expectations known. After talking to the child, if the behavior doesn't stop, you will need to remove them from situations of competition until they are confident that they can stop being a sore loser. You need to appreciate and recognize your child's sense of disappointment – however it is critical that you teach the child that acting out in response is not acceptable behavior.
- 49. How should I handle sibling rivalry?** There is nothing more irritating to a parent than sibling squabbles. This is particularly true when there is a sibling rivalry. Competition between siblings is healthy if and only if the children are equally matched against one another in sports or activities where they have similar interest and ability. And, you need to make it clear that such competition is only acceptable as long as there is not an end result of fighting. It is important to recognize the emotions behind sibling rivalries, but you should never take sides.
- 50. How can I keep my older child from pushing my buttons?** Pre-teens and teens love to make their parents angry, or so it seems. The best defense against your child's attempts to get you upset is to remain totally calm in the face of an argument. Do not let your child maintain control over your emotions or a situation, otherwise you will find yourself on the losing end of a lifetime battle. If your child argues with you, simply respond by stating your opinions on a situation and implement punishments

that are much less enjoyable than the excitement of you losing your temper. This is the only way to stop you child from pushing your buttons just to get a reaction.

- 51. How can I understand why my child loves to argue with me?** Children like power. Arguing gives them a sense of power, particularly when you react instead of respond. One of the most important things to any older child is proving that he or she is right – and that everyone else is wrong. You will never win a power struggle with a child – so don't allow a power struggle to evolve in the first place. When your child starts to argue, state your response ONCE and walk away. If you need to repeat what you said more than one time, be prepared with consequences.
- 52. How can I handle a child who demands my complete attention?** Children like to control people and situations. That is their nature. If your child demands your complete attention during waking hours, you need to encourage independent activities and wean your child off of your constant attention. Do not give in to tantrums, which are nothing more than a way to get your attention. And remember that negative attention is still attention, which is what the child wants. Learn to walk away after a response and don't set your self up for a situation where you need to go on and on with explanations of why you need to do something other than what your child wants you to do at a particular moment.
- 53. How can I get my children to actually USE table manners?** Table manners are one of those pet peeves that all parents have and only some find the energy to enforce. Some simple rules to use from early childhood include not eating until everyone at the table is seated and served, and not interrupting when another family member is speaking. Be sure to insist that your child say please and thank you, and always stop inappropriate dinner conversations as soon as they start. These are some simple things that you can impart on your children so that in the future when they are dining with others, you can feel confident that they will be on their best mealtime behavior.
- 54. What should I do to teach my children phone etiquette?** Telephone etiquette is a must. In order to teach your child to use proper phone etiquette, you must use it yourself. A young child will imitate mom and dad when answering the telephone and taking messages. When you answer the phone and take a message, ask 'who's calling please' and then immediately grab a notepad and pen to write down the message. Designate a message area, and show your child that you put messages in this spot for the recipient. Your children will imitate your behavior, but it is a good idea to reinforce these ideas by correcting your child when he or she does not take a message and simply hangs up. It will take a few years for your child to develop good phone manners, but unless you want to miss important messages in the future it is worth taking the time to make your expectations clear.
- 55. How can I develop a stronger bond with my child?** The answer is simple; spend more time with your child! An idea that you might want to try is cooking with your child one night every week, trying new recipes that are kid friendly and fun to make.

You might also want to consider having a game night every week, or going to the library together to get some fun books you will both enjoy.

**56. How can I raise a well-behaved child?** The most important role model that your child will ever have is you. If you want your child to behave, then you need to pay attention to what you do and say in front of your children. For example, if you would prefer that your child use correct English instead of street slang – don't use street slang in front of your children. If you expect your child to be properly dressed, you also need to be properly dressed. And, if you want your child to learn to control his or her temper – then you also need to control your temper. Your child is watching and learning.

**57. How can I make sure I'm raising a child who goes after what he wants?** Encourage your child to explore and to expand his horizons at every opportunity. This does not mean putting your child into dangerous situations, rather it means putting your child into safe situations where he may sometimes feel intimidated. Encourage your child by offering positive feedback and more encouragement! Children who learn to test their surroundings and push their limits will become more well rounded adults.

**58. How can I raise a child who follows the rules?** Rules come in all shapes and sizes throughout the course of our lives. Therefore, it is very important to teach your children from a young age that it is important to follow rules. A good way to dissuade your child from following rules is to constantly break and complain about rules in front of them. If you want to raise your child to follow the rules you need to be their number one role model. This may mean stopping for more stop signs – but remember that when your child starts driving they will still be paying more attention to what you DO than what you SAY.

**59. What are some ways to make sure that my child feels loved?** Positive feedback and encouragement are the two biggest tools that a parent can use to make sure that their child feels loved. Always offer your child kind words of appreciation and thanks when they do something that makes you happy or proud. When your child is misbehaving, and you need to criticize a behavior, make sure that you explain that it's not the child that you dislike – it is the behavior. Telling your child that you believe in them and support their decisions is a very strong way to get the point across!

**60. How can I put my family first?** There is a difference between playing chauffeur and spending quality time with your family. You need to set up times when you can interact with your entire family, as well as individual family members. As a parent, know that it is not healthy to schedule your life 100% around the activities and schedules of your children. You cannot meet everyone's expectations every day, and sometimes you will need to disappoint one family member in order to put the interests of the entire family first.

**61. How can I get my child to sleep and keep him asleep?** Make sure that when you put your child to bed that they are comfortable. Sleep clothes should be a comfortable weight and loose fitting so that your child is not bothered by pajamas that do not feel quite right. Keep your child's room dark at night. Nightlights are a convenience item that can unfortunately also keep your child awake or even frighten him in the middle of the night. You are better off not offering a security item like a pacifier, baby bottle or blanket to a young child because the attachment that develops is very hard to break when your child gets older. Make sure that with young children especially, you keep the bedroom for sleeping. This will help your child to make a connection between his room and sleep.

**62. How can I tell why my infant is crying?** Figuring out what your baby is trying to communicate to you is almost as difficult as learning a second language! But, once you do learn what your baby is telling you, you will be relieved that you finally understand what he needs. Infants generally cry for only a few reasons: hunger, sleepiness, boredom and physical discomfort. A good way to start decoding what your infant is telling you is to start changing things until the crying stops. Pick your baby up, and if he continues to cry check his diaper. If the diaper is dry, offer some food, etc. You will know when you have figured out a particular cry, because the results will be consistent with most children.

**62. What are some ways to calm a crying baby?** The first step is to make sure all of her basic needs are taken care of. That she's not wet, hungry, tired, overstimulated, lonely, cold or hot. If addressing these issues does not calm her down then there are a few techniques you can try. Some popular methods include singing softly, "shushing" loudly in baby's ear and rocking from side to side vigorously. You can also try this trick – but NEVER leave your infant unattended – put the child in his car seat and place the car seat on top of a running clothes dryer. The vibration and white noise can have an excellent calming effect. Calming a crying baby often takes some trial and error. But remain confident in your parenting abilities and keep your cool. Once you figure out what works well for your little one, you'll be better equipped for future crying fits.

**63. How can I help my baby when he is fussy?** One of the most common reasons for fussiness is gas pain. To help calm your child, and to relieve the gas pains that are causing the fussiness, you can place him on his back and gently move his legs as though he's peddling a bicycle. If this doesn't work, you might want to talk to your child's pediatrician, who may recommend gas drops or even a prescription, which will help to eliminate gassiness.

**64. What are some ways to have fun with my young child?** Infants and toddlers love to spend time with their parents. And they're happy doing just about anything! However, parents often find themselves wondering what activities they can do with their young child. One fun idea is to make some popcorn, pull out some fuzzy blankets and enjoy a movie or book together cuddled on the sofa. Do a craft together such as a simple coloring or painting project or buy stickers and create some

interesting gifts. Dancing is always a hit with kids and a great way to burn off some energy while you get lots of laughs. You can also play simple games like eye spy. The beauty of these games is that they can be adapted for younger children and they can be played anywhere.

- 65. How can I stay involved with my child's education?** School is where your child will spend the majority of his time during the most formative years of his life. Therefore, it's extremely important to stay in contact with the teachers and administrator's to keep track of how your child is performing. You need to be concerned with more than the grades on report cards and exams. You should also ask questions about how well your child interacts with other students and the teachers. Being there is the best way to see exactly what is going on. Whenever possible, you or your spouse should volunteer to help in the classroom or chaperone special events and field trips.
- 66. How should I plan for the costs of raising a child?** Many new parents or expectant parents will meet with a financial planner to discuss their financial situation and plans for the future. This often includes setting up an education fund and even a separate savings account to put away a little money each month to help offset unexpected expenses. When it comes to estimating the amount you'll spend on your child you should budget for healthcare, clothing, diapers, formula (if you choose to formula feed), childcare and the purchase of any items you need such as a carseat, crib, playpen, highchair or baby swing. If money is tight consider borrowing items from friends or buying them second hand. And ask around about assistance programs in your community that help families with young children.
- 67. How do I know when to give my child cold medicine?** The answer to this question depends on the age, weight and symptoms of your child. If your child is very young you should never give him medication until you have spoken with his pediatrician. For toddlers and older children cold medications can be a good way to provide relief of symptoms such as coughing and congestion and allow them to sleep better. Look for "children's versions" of the same cold medication you use and be sure to follow the directions exactly, being careful not to give more than the recommended dose.
- 69. How do I know when to take my child to the emergency room?** Go with your gut instinct. If you suspect that your child is experiencing a medical emergency that requires immediate treatment, take the child to the nearest emergency room. If you have doubts about whether to go to the emergency room and can reach your child's pediatrician first then contact him or her for help determining the best solution is for this particular medical problem. But never wait if something doesn't feel right. Some medical conditions can worsen rapidly and it's not worth the risk.
- 70. When should I start giving my child an allowance?** A good rule of thumb is that when your child starts asking for money to buy items, they are ready to start receiving an allowance. Giving your child money of their own can be a great way to teach her

child about the value and responsibility of money. When establishing an allowance system with younger children, consider keeping the money until your child needs it for something. This will alleviate a lot of frivolous spending, and guarantee that your child will not lose her money.

- 71. How can I determine whether to teach my child a second language?** Learning another language is a great enrichment activity for children. And they're such little sponges that you will be amazed at how quickly they pick it up! It can even be a great family activity to learn a new language together. Even if your child never uses the second language, the logic skills associated with language development will be helpful and useful to your child for many years to come.
- 72. How can I raise my child to be successful?** One of the most important things to keep in mind is that how you define success may not be what how your child defines it. Accepting this is the first step in being able to accept whatever path he chooses in life. That said, there are things you can do to encourage your child to aspire to do important things with his life. The absolute best way to increase your child's chances of success is to be involved. From a very early age, know what is going on with his education, extra-curricular activities, hobbies and social activities. Guide him to make choices that will broaden his horizons and open doors for him in the future. As he gets older, keep the lines of communication open so he sees you as someone who can be used as a source of good advice or as a sounding board. Remember, as a parent you play a key role in the type of person your child becomes.
- 73. How do I teach my child to donate to charity?** A good way to show your child the importance of donating to charity is to start them in the habit early! What some parents will do is to give their child a weekly allowance that is to be split between three jars. One is for spending, one is for saving and the third is money that will be given to a charity of your child's choosing.
- 74. How can I keep my child safe online?** The first rule is to never leave your child unattended online. If you allow your child to be online without constant supervision, you should consider installing parental block software and possibly ensuring that your child is not using instant messenger - or at least restricting the use of instant messenger to only those friends whom you have met. And be sure to talk to your child about Internet safety and the dangers that exist.
- 75. Where can I get help for problems with a special needs child?** Ask your pediatrician for recommendations about resources, support groups and possibly even the name and phone number of someone else with a special needs child. You can never have too many resources, and there is help out there if you are willing to take the time to ask and to look for it.