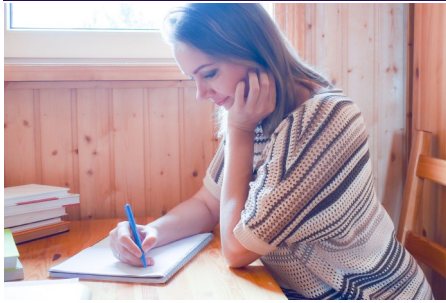




Monthly Parenting Tip from the ACFC

November 2020



Putting it in Writing

A child's self-esteem does not spring from achievements alone. It is much more important for most people to be accepted by significant people in their lives—to belong. In fact, much of our effort to be successful is really fueled by our desire to win the acceptance of those significant people. What most of us really want deep down inside is to be accepted for being ourselves, not for our achievements.

If you know Active Parenting, you know the value we put on building courage in our children through the process of encouragement. "Putting it in writing" is such a powerful force in our society that a written letter of encouragement will often carry more weight than the mere words themselves. The goal for parents is to communicate to our children that win or lose, pass or fail, in the limelight or in the line-up, we are still their parents and we are glad of it. Children who feel accepted by their parents have a bedrock of self-esteem upon which to construct a healthy, happy life. Without it, some of the wealthiest, most accomplished people in history have lived lives of quiet desperation, wondering why their successes were never satisfying.

This week, in the spirit of Thanksgiving, write each of your children a short letter focusing on what about them you are thankful for. This can include their strengths, areas of improvement and how they contribute to the family. Then either mail the letter or put it someplace where each child will find it. And no texting! They should have a hard copy to keep and reread whenever they want to. With very young children, you can read it to them—but they'll still enjoy having a letter of their own to keep.

Keep a few tips in mind as you write:

- Focus on improvement, not perfection.
- Be sincere, or they will see through you like a greedy relative at a funeral.
- Be specific about what you like and about the improvements.
- Include how the child's positive behavior has been helpful to others.
- And don't forget the most important message: "I'm thankful you are my son/daughter and I love you."

You may not receive a big thank-you from your child, nor should you expect them to suddenly stop complaining at bedtime. Just know that underneath the surface, your words will have an encouraging impact that will nourish their roots like fertilizer.

To learn more about essential parenting skills, visit the Active Parenting page on the [ACFC website](#) to discover all of the parenting resources available to ACFC members.

Dr. Michael Popkin, Founder and President, Active Parenting Publishers
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FREE LIFE-CHANGING ONLINE PARENTING COURSES

In these video-based, interactive classes—available 24/7—you'll learn a consistent, encouraging style of parenting that will benefit you and your children for a lifetime. With this self-study course, you have the option of when to participate based on your own schedule and at your convenience. Gain additional insight from your online group leaders as they provide support and feedback.

Choose from four available courses:

- **Active Parenting: First Five Years:**
For parents of children from birth to age 5
- **Active Parenting 4th ED:**
For parents of children ages 5 to 12
- **Active Parenting of Teens:**
For parents of preteens and teens
- **Crossroads of Parenting & Divorce:**
For divorced and divorcing parents

Continue your experience as an "active" parent by reviewing what you learn in the class in your accompanying parent guide. Each guide contains additional information, activities, and worksheets to help you practice what you learn.

Visit [ACFCcares.com](#) for more information and to start your Active Parenting journey today.

To learn more about how you can become an "active" parent, go to [vimeopro.com/activeparenting/acfc](#) and enter Access Code: ACFC150630 (case-sensitive) when prompted. You'll find a library of informative videos for parents of children of all ages.