



Monthly Parenting Tip from the ACFC

December 2020



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](https://www.acfccares.com) for more information and to start your Active Parenting journey today.

The Courage to Succeed

Courage is such an important character trait in today's complex world of choices that it forms the very foundation upon which children construct their personality. Without courage, children can't take risks to seize the opportunities they need for success. Courage is a feeling of confidence that motivates us to take risks, knowing that we have a chance to succeed, and that even if we fail, the risk was worth taking. Courage comes from a belief in ourselves that we are lovable, capable human beings who will eventually succeed. And even if we fail, we are still lovable, capable human beings. This belief in ourselves is called “self-esteem.” When children think well of themselves—have high self-esteem—when they believe they have a good chance to succeed, then they will have the courage to take risks. Without this feeling of courage, they will find themselves sitting on the sidelines, unwilling to take the risks needed to complete any endeavor. Without courage, they will let life pass by while wishfully waiting for someone else to lead the way. Without courage, they are more likely to be influenced by negative factors they encounter. Low self-esteem leads to discouragement, and children are afraid of taking risks, or make unwise ones because they don't value themselves, or they're afraid of losing approval from family or friends. The French word *coeur*, meaning “heart,” is the base of the English word *courage*. Just as the heart has long been considered the center of human emotions, courage might be the core of a person's character. Courage is intimately linked to fear. Everyone experiences this two-sided coin at some point in life, especially during times of risk. *Do I go ahead or turn back? What if I fail? What if they reject me? Do I dare to take the chance?* It is our courage that keeps us going when the easier path is to quit or give in to an unwise temptation. Because striving for the most positive goals in life requires some risk, courage is essential.

What can parents do to encourage their children and develop the courage they need to be successful? They can:

- Help limit negative influences and encourage positive ones.
- Avoid focusing on mistakes, expecting too little or too much, and overprotecting and pampering.
- Encourage positive values and rational beliefs.
- Encourage them to identify and accept their feelings. Teach them to listen to the message behind their feelings.
- Encourage positive behavior by building on strengths, showing confidence, valuing the child, and stimulating independence.

Remember, courage is needed to resist peer pressure. Kids with high self-esteem are more likely to realize they are too important to hurt themselves or others. Self-esteem and courage allow kids to take a stand for what they know is right. You, as parents, can help your children grow the confidence and self-esteem they need to survive and thrive.

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.