



Advisory Council on Family Care

Monthly Parenting Tip from the ACFC

May 2021



FREE ONLINE COURSES THAT IMPROVE YOUR FAMILY LIFE

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. As a 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.

Four available classes:

- **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
- **Crossroads of Parenting & Divorce**—for divorced and divorcing parents
- **Active Parenting of Teens**—for parents of preteens and teens

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 Power of Mutual Respect

One of the cornerstones of cooperation and effective communication is mutual respect. This concept applies whether you are in your home or the workplace. If you want others to treat you respectfully, you must learn to show respect, even when you may not agree with someone else's belief or opinion. Teaching our children mutual respect sets the groundwork for how they will get along with others as they interact at school or on the job. During times of frustration or stress, it can be easy to forget to treat your children with the same respect you expect from them. Showing our kids respect means not yelling at them or being sarcastic in a critical way, or otherwise speaking to them in ways you wouldn't want them speaking to you. There are also more subtle forms of disrespect to guard against. For example, an overprotective dad who is quick to jump in to solve his daughter's problem—without giving her the chance to find a solution for herself—is being disrespectful. If you catch yourself treating your child disrespectfully, it is wise to smile, apologize, and, if necessary, make amends. Showing your children that you are human and can admit to making mistakes goes a long way to strengthening your relationship. For example:

“I'm sorry I yelled at you. That wasn't very respectful. Let me try again more calmly to tell you why I was angry.”

As you make the effort to treat your child respectfully, it's important to insist your child show you respect as well. This may require teaching on your part, since children don't always know how to be respectful. For example:

“I don't talk to you that way. Please don't talk to me that way.”

Learning to respect oneself regardless of strengths, weaknesses, family culture or heritage is a building block for self-esteem and success. When you show your children respect, even when you are angry or providing discipline, you help them learn to respect themselves while demonstrating how to treat others respectfully. The respect with which you treat your spouse or significant other, your extended family, and even strangers sets an example for your child. When mutual respect is a cornerstone of your interactions with people, your child will learn to emulate this behavior.

There is so much diversity in our modern society that it is important to teach children to respect others based on their character and behavior, not on their differences or uniqueness. An unusual school activity had all the children stand behind a line. One by one the children crossed this line as a unique feature was called out, such as the color of their hair, whether they were tall or short, or whether they wore glasses. They learned that they each had unique features that made them different, but also very alike. Imagine a world where we all respected our differences and appreciated those things we have in common with one another.

Respect is something you have to give in order to get it. ~ Bernard Malamud

Helpful videos and online classes are offered free of charge by the ACFC in partnership with Active Parenting. To access more invaluable parenting resources, just go to the [ACFC website](https://www.acfccares.com) and click on the Active Parenting tab on the left-hand side of the home page.