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Making time for your kids

By Samantha Olea

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Making time for your kids...It's more important than you think. If a child grows up feeling as if they were an after thought, or that they just don't matter that much to you it directly affects who they become as adults. Children need a sense of self that can not be bought at the nearest toy store, and can't be played in the DVD player.

We all have the best intentions when it comes to our children. A majority of parents have to work between 40 and 60 hours a week just to provide for their children. As a former "Latch Key Kid" myself, who attended daycare until the age of 12 before being able to ride the bus home by myself to care for my 8 year old sister until my mother came home 3 hours later; I know all too well what it's like when your parents are always at work. What made it worse was that by the time my parents did come home, they were absolutely exhausted. In hindsight, I can see why they did it—to provide for us and make sure we had the things we wanted and needed— but back then I didn't know, and it made me feel pretty crummy.

Unfortunately, by the time children really grasp the reason that their parents are always so busy, they likely have their own children and are also working all of the time. The good news is, there are some things that you can do starting today that can let your children know that above all else they matter to you.

Try to give your children at least 30 minutes every day doing things that reassure them, and when doing so make sure to talk in a pleasant (but real) voice, make eye contact, and listen to what they are saying. Show no anger or disappointment in this very special time slot. Here are some ideas:

- Get on the floor and play with them. You will be amazed at just how different the world looks from the floor, and you're coming down to their level which they LOVE.
- Be silly. For no reason at all, start singing a silly song, talk with a funny accent, or walk in the room

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with a bowl on your head—just do something silly that will catch them off guard and keep being silly! Teach them funny jokes or songs you remember from your childhood.

–Read them a story—kids love to have stories read to them! When looking for good books, make sure they are either appropriate for all ages, or your child's age, and look for books with very fun and vivid pictures. Remember, this isn't a text book! I'd shy away from books based on popular movies {I'll not mention the company}—they tend to be long winded, and not as enjoyable as others.

–Cook together—this is great for boys and girls. The children find this so rewarding, and it is fun. Don't fuss about them spilling this or that, because it is inevitable—and you are actively creating memories, so make them good ones. Great food choices are home made pizza, sandwiches, cookies, lasagna, pigs in the blankets, boxed macaroni, etc.

–Take a walk. This is a great time of year for walks, and while you are looking at the beautifully changing landscape, you can ask your children about their day. Ask about their teacher and their

friends. If this is the first time you've really truly talked to your child about their life, they may give short answers at first. If that happens, break the ice by telling them some interesting stories about yourself when you were their age, and don't expect too much. Just be there, and be receptive.

–Dance. Turn on the radio, kick off your heals, and grab your partner. Involve them in it, and be silly. They will love it.

There are so many ways to reconnect with your children and help them know that you care more about them than anything. We sometimes forget that children have limited life experiences to base their thoughts on. If you are gone a lot, and in a bad mood when you are home, to them that says : `You aren't important to me.' or `I don't like you' . Kids tend to have tunnel vision, and think that everything that you do is a direct reflection of how you (the most important person in their world) feel about them. Though you can't quit your job, you can change your child's perception by simply taking 30 minutes a day. As a bonus, this time actually helps you to relax also, which is better for everyone.

Enjoy your children. They are kids for a limited time only!

Samantha Olea is a designer, business woman, wife, and most of all Mother of 2! Samantha founded a free parenting resource at <http://TheBestMoms.com> hoping to help every mom be the very best mom they can be! Samantha is also the owner of her own web design, graphic design, and hosting firm at : <http://getwrappedup.com> and AWU Gifts: <http://Gifts.GetWrappedUp.com> , where she helps Moms work from their homes.

Luggage For Kids

By Jerry Smith

Traveling with children is never easy and sometimes it's not even fun. There is help on the way to alleviate this problem. Luggage makers have created kid-sized luggage in bright colors and unique designs.

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Like adult luggage kid luggage has wheels. Some brands of kids luggage have wheels that are gender based. Your children will feel grown-up pulling their own bags. Besides watching kids pull their luggage is cute.

Included in kids luggage are backpacks with animals that 'hug' your child. Backpacks and other luggage for kids are bright colors, cartoon characters, sports themes, flowers, dance, music, and space. Luggage can be personalized with their names. There are bags for boys in the shapes of cars.

Styles of luggage for kids include duffel bags, sport bags, backpacks with pockets for a radio or CD player. There are tote bags that will hold your child's toys and/or books. Other themes are flowers, animals, and camouflage design.

Kids luggage are sized for kids and designed for their needs. The kids luggage is also a way to ease your burden as they have their own carry on bag. Having kids use their own luggage can help them to care for their things and allows them to have fun as well.

Many backpacks and other luggage for both adults and kids have holders for bottles and have waterproof snack pouches. There is also an element of convenience with kids luggage. Be creative and have fun traveling with your child or children.

Jerry Smith can help you. Find out how thousands of people have been helped with the advice and information. Visit this link for details:

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