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Top Ten Ways to Raise Emotionally Intelligent Children

By Mark Brandenburg MA, CPCC

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Having a high level of emotional intelligence in your children is the best way to ensure that they live a happy, successful, and responsible life as an adult. Here are ten ways to help your kids attain a high degree of emotional intelligence:

1. Model emotional intelligence yourself

Yes, your kids are watching very closely. They see how you respond to frustration, they see how resilient you are, and they see whether you're aware of your own feelings and the feelings of others.

2. Be willing to say "no" to your kids

There's a lot of stuff out there for kids. And your kids will ask for a lot of it. Saying no will give your kids an opportunity to deal with disappointment and to learn impulse control. To a certain degree, your job as a parent is to allow your kids to be frustrated and to work through it. Kids who always get what they want typically aren't very happy.

3. Be aware of your parental "hotspots"

Know what your issues are—what makes you come unglued and what's this really about? Is it not being in control? Not being respected? Underneath these issues lies a fear about something. Get to know what your fear is so you're less likely to come unglued when you're with your kids. Knowing your issues doesn't make them go away, it just makes it easier to plan for and to deal with.

4. Practice and hone your skills at being non-judgmental

Start labeling feelings and avoid name-calling. Say, "he seems angry," rather than, "what a jerk." When your kids are whiny or crying, saying things like, "you seem sad," will always be better than just asking them to stop. Depriving kids of the feelings they're experiencing will only drive them underground and make them stronger.

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5. Start coaching your kids

When kids are beyond the toddler years, you can start coaching them to help them to be more responsible. Instead of "get your hat and gloves," you can ask, "what do you need to be ready for school?" Constantly telling your kids what to do does not help them to develop confidence and responsibility.

6. Always be willing to be part of the problem

See yourself as having something to do with every problem that comes along. Most problems in families get bigger when parents respond to them in a way that exacerbates the problem. If your child

makes a mistake, remember how crucial it is for you to have a calm, reasoned response.

7. Get your kids involved in household duties at an early age

Research suggests that kids who are involved in household chores from an early age tend to be happier and more successful. Why? From an early age, they're made to feel they are an important part of the family. Kids want to belong and to feel like they're valuable.

8. Limit your kids access to mass media mania

Young kids need to play, not spend time in front of a screen. To develop creativity and problem-solving skills, allow your kids time to use free play. Much of the mass media market can teach your kids about consumerism, sarcasm, and violence. What your kids learn from you and from free play with others will provide the seeds for future emotional intelligence.

9. Talk about feelings as a family

State your emotional goals as a family. These might be no yelling, no name-calling, be respectful at all times, etc. Families that talk about their goals are more likely to be aware of them and to achieve them. As the parent, you then have to "walk the talk."

10. See your kids as wonderful

There is no greater way to create emotional intelligence in your child than to see them as wonderful and capable. One law of the universe is, "what you think about expands." If you see your child and think about them as wonderful, you'll get a lot of "wonderful." If you think about your child as a problem, you'll get a lot of problems.

Having a high IQ is nice, but having a high "EQ" is even better. Make these ten ideas daily habits and you'll give your kids the best chance possible to be happy, productive, and responsible adults.

Mark Brandenburg MA, CPCC, coaches men to be better fathers and husbands. He is the author of "25 Secrets of Emotionally Intelligent Fathers" <http://www.markbrandenburg.com/father.htm> For more

great tips and action steps for fathers, sign up for his FREE bi-weekly newsletter, "Dads, Don't Fix Your Kids," at <http://www.markbrandenburg.com>.

The Top 10 Ways to Have an Emotionally Intelligent Night Before Christmas

By Susan Dunn

Use your EQ skills to have an enjoyable and manageable Christmas! With thanks to Clement Clark Moore.

1.

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there.

Keep Intentionality and Focus in mind. Christmas adds another full-time job to our already busy schedules. Your Intent, no doubt, is to have a good Christmas while keeping all the other balls in the air and not ending up exhausted or with debt you don't want. Focus on Christmas and everything else in its turn, and get those stockings hung by the chimney with care.

2.

The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar plums danced in their heads.
And Mama in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap.

You need reserves to keep your resilience and stamina up. Take good care of you, your loved ones and your workers — lots of sleep, but also lots of snuggling. It's not emotionally intelligent to damage a relationship because of Christmas stress. Emotions will be on high, so soothing tones and "visions of sugar plums" — optimistic thoughts — will help. Your attitude makes it a happy Christmas.

3.

When out on the roof there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
tore open the shutter, and threw up the sash.

"Springing," reacting to new things is normal, but don't forget to slow down your "wondering eyes." It's emotionally intelligent to take a second look, or to count to ten. Don't just react — take a close look at what's going on, give it some thought, collect yourself, and then respond.

4.

With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.

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Use your EQ to read the nonverbal signals of people so you can find out what their strengths are and

"who" they are. Try the StrengthsFinder profile on my website. If Santa's "lively and quick," he doesn't belong in the Quality Control Dept. Let him, well, deliver gifts on Christmas!

5.

And he whistled and shouted and called them by name:

"Now Dasher! Now Dancer!

Now, Prancer and Vixen!

On, Donner and Blitzen!

There is magic in our names, and good leaders, parents and lovers know this. If you want to have impact on someone, use their name. And first of all, be emotionally intelligent enough to learn the names of everyone you interact with. If you can't remember someone's names, why would they want to work for you?

6.

To the top of the porch!

To the top of the wall!

Now dash away! Dash away

Make your wants and needs known. If you want your husband to help with the tree, tell him. Most people prefer to be told what to do, not how. If you want your daughter to finish her Christmas gifts by a certain time, tell her. If you want an electric appliance for Christmas, say you. You won't always get what you want, but you'll never get it if you don't ask and then make it clear.

7.

His eyes—how they twinkled! His dimples, how merry!

His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!

His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,

And the beard on his chin was as white as the snow.

Emotionally intelligent people use descriptive metaphors and similes in their speech. They tell stories, use myths, and draw on pictures to get information across in ways that touch other people.

8.

He had a broad face and a little round belly,

That shook when he laughed, like a bowl full of jelly.

He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,

And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself.

A sense of humor can be the saving grace during the holidays. Emotions are contagious, so you be the one to laugh like a jolly old elf, and watch others laugh in spite of themselves. Under pressure, humor works better than yelling.

9.

A wink of his eye and a twist of his head
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.

We all wonder and worry about other people. Use a wink of an eye and a twist of a head --- and lots of other nonverbal expressions and gestures --- to let people know what you're like, how you feel, and who

you are, so they can relax. It eases tension, saves a lot of exploratory time, and makes effective leaders --- whether CEOs or Moms or Dads.

10.

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings, then turned with a jerk.

Here it is again --- intentionality. Speak not a word, but go straight to your work! No randomness allowed. Be honest about your motivations. If you intend to have a happy Christmas, then have one. If you intend to have an unhappy one and be stressed, irritable, unpleasant, spend too much and pick fights with relatives, have one; but don't be sloppy and have a bad one when you intended to have a Merry one.

Then you and those around you can exclaim:

Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night.

©Susan Dunn, MA Clinical Psychology, cEQc, The EQ Coach™, <http://www.susandunn.cc> . Emotional Intelligence coaching, teaching, training, and assessments. Susan is the author of "How to You're your Life with Emotional Intelligence and other eBooks available at <http://www.webstrategies.cc/ebooklibrary.html> . Mailto:sdunn@susandunn.cc for FREE eZine.

The Top 10 Ways to Have an Emotionally Intelligent Night Before Christmas

Raising Emotionally Intelligent Sons

What is your PROBLEM? There Must Be 50 Ways to...

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How to Create an Emotional Bond with Your Child

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How Nice Guys, Shy Guys and Good Guys Finish First!

Bread And Biscuit Baker's And Sugar-Boiler's Assistant

Baby's First Year -What Parent Needs To Know

The Alphabet of Birds



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