

Top 4 Tips for Balancing Work and Raising Great Kids

1. Toddlers and Young Kids

- a. The early years are where you set traditions as a family and determine what will define your unique family identity. So, remember to make your TIME WITH YOUR FAMILY as important as your business meetings.
- b. Each month, choose ONE SPECIFIC GOAL that you want to accomplish as a parent and focus on it. For example, this month, I will read with my child 3 days a week. Or, I will take my child out for one-on-one time twice this month. Or, when my child tries to get my attention, I will work on looking him in the eye and focusing on him, rather than thinking about what I need to get done at work.
- c. Make DINNERS a family occasion. When the kids are babies, begin a pattern of sitting down at dinner and talking together, even if it is just for 20 minutes. As the kids get older (about 3 or so) introduce the “High-Low” game where each family member talks about the best and worst part of their day. This family tradition sets a great foundation for open lines of communication – which is something that you will need for the teen years!
- d. Don’t rob yourself of SLEEP and EXERCISE. Getting plenty of both will make you more relaxed, more confident, more patient and overall a better parent and employee.

2. Teens

- a. Use the DINNER TABLE as a gauge. If you have gone too many nights without your family gathering for a meal, something has to change!
- b. Be present and cheering at GAMES/EVENTS. Many parents will divide and conquer, but make sure your teen is always supported.
- c. Have a weekly CALENDAR meeting. Each person goes over their schedule for the week so everyone is on the same page. This is fabulous for communication and creating a sense of community.
- d. You are on a parenting COUNTDOWN! You have only 1-5 years left with your teen. Make opportunities for one-on-one time with him/her!

3. Grandkids

- a. Utilize your GROWING FREEDOM. Whether it’s your later years in your career or you’re already in retirement, utilize your time that you have to build into the lives of your grandkids. You have the opportunity to be a secondary reinforcer of the values, standards and relationships in life that the kids are learning from their parents.

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Tips for Young Children by Eryn-Faye Frans, LL.B. ®

Tips for Teens by Christie Rayburn ®

Tips for Grandkids by Dave Currie ®

- b. Be INTENTIONAL about connecting. Relationships with your grandkids don't happen by accident, especially if you're not living near them. Make an effort to find ways to connect, encourage and touch the lives of your grandkids, despite the pressures of continued work or greater freedom and fun in retirement. Be sure not to miss the opportunity to influence the next generation.
- c. Keep YOUR RELATIONSHIPS right. It is very important as a foundation for influencing your grandchildren that your relationships with your own children and their spouses are positive. You need to work with them on their boundaries and guidelines for the children and support them in those. This is important for you to continue to maintain healthy relationships and access to your grandkids.
- d. Find SPECIAL WAYS to connect. Even though you may be still at the top of your career and very busy, you can develop new ways to stay in touch with your kids and grandkids. Try texting, emailing and MSN, as well as maintain the traditional methods of words of encouragement on the phone, letters, notes, cards or small gifts to let them know you're thinking about them.

**For example, in our home we have bought special dress up clothes, videos and toys for our grandchildren to enjoy when they come and visit us. Further, a special way that I connect with my granddaughters is to draw little flowers on their hands. They love this and now expect it every time they come over – it is something that is unique to our relationship.