

**9 Pointers for Parents from**  
**"Heaven Helps the Home" by Howard Hendricks and Yours Truly**

1. Provide an atmosphere in the home that builds warm, close, personal relationships. Make sure the home is a place of belonging and love. That means spending time with your children!
2. Be a good example to your children. Your faith and values will be more likely *caught* by your kids than *taught* to your kids. Don't be afraid to admit mistakes. Kids need to see that you are human and big enough to accept grace and forgiveness. Then they will grow up into adults who can forgive and accept forgiveness as well.
3. Allow gradual emancipation from the apron strings of parental authority. Begin early to feed them responsibility, a little at a time. Evaluate the results and adjust their freedom according to their ability to handle it. (Genesis 2:15)
4. When children need guidance and counsel, provide a relaxed, informal setting. Spend time building a warm relationship (not friendship) with your child so that he or she will be more willing to accept your counsel.
5. Set limits. Children want and need the security of boundaries and restrictions. But discipline your children only in the context of love. Your children will not accept your limits unless they know they are loved, and you tell them you love them not only with words, but more importantly with your time, attention, and genuine interest.
6. Apply the law of natural consequences as they grow up. As your children grow in their ability to make decisions, let them decide – but also let them live with the results of their decisions. If we make all their decisions for them, they will lose confidence in their own ability to make decisions. If we bail them out and shield them from the consequences of their decisions, they will grow up with an irresponsible attitude, expecting never to have to deal with consequences. In some cases, it's healthy for children to make mistakes and accept the consequences – as long as they are not consequences that cause serious or lifelong harm. (Beyond 18 they are NOT children)
7. Manage their expectations with honesty and love! They CANNOT be ANYTHING they want to be! To tell them this is to set them up for failure, disappointment, and anger!
8. Teach your children that their worth is to be found in having been made in the Image of God NOT in social acceptance, financial success, intellectual prowess, or good looks! (JOHN 3:16)
9. MOST IMPORTANTLY, surround your children with a fortress of prayer and with the Word. (Psalm 119:11) Trust the Holy Spirit to care for them, cover for your inevitable occasional mistakes, and bring your children (HIS children) to a place of faith and maturity.

1 Peter 4:8-9 (ESV)

"Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins."