

EXPERIENCED  
 FOCUSED  
 RELATIONSHIP-DRIVEN

# WI\$E PARENTING

## FAMILY VALUES: What's your mission statement?<sup>1</sup>

*Provided they are developed with intent, corporate mission statements can be quite powerful in guiding an organization and its people. Extending that idea to one's personal realm of affairs is not much of a stretch. A family mission statement can help provide direction, clarity and unity.*

Try this thought-provoking exercise with your spouse and children. Begin an open conversation with your family about values, including money. Document the conversation. Once you are done, have the entire family sign the statement and display it in a prominent place in your home so you may always be reminded of what matters most to you.

### Call a family meeting

Talking about things that matter to a family starts with, well, talking. Communication is key to sharing with children how you feel about big and small matters. A family meeting is a great place to start.

### Ask good questions, and listen carefully

Ask what your family is all about. Find out your children's perception of your family, and share with them your vision. Above all, listen carefully. This is as much an information gathering exercise, as it is an information sharing exercise.

### Take good notes

Document what everyone has to say; even your youngest contributors will have something worthwhile to add to the conversation.

### Make it a team activity

No single person should hog the show: everyone should have a say, and everyone should feel important. If you make this an inclusive conversation, the dividends will be huge.

### You don't have to do it all in one shot

It's OK to take breaks, or do this over the course of several weeks. Having time to think may be good for everyone. Just make sure to capture and document any ideas that come up in between your sit-down sessions.

### Show it off

Once you're done, write up your final copy and get every family member to sign it. Date it, frame it and hang it somewhere the whole family can see – in the living room, or in the kitchen. That way it will stay top of mind, and remain a conversation piece for a long, long time.

### Need a sample?

Check out our mission statement template online at [www.franklincovey.com/msb/](http://www.franklincovey.com/msb/)

<sup>1</sup> Use our mission statement template, inspired by Franklin Covey's Mission Statement Builder [<http://www.franklincovey.com/msb/>] to get you started. If you prefer a high tech approach, there are several interactive tools online to assist you.



Read these helpful tips for creating your family mission statement.

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