

10 Ways to Be An Exceptional Parent

pastors.com/10-ways-exceptional-parent/

Doug and Cathy Fields



If you're a parent, then our guess is that you've thought about what it's going to be like when your child eventually leaves home one day. You've probably also wondered, *what kind of person is my child going to become someday? And have I been a good parent or have I just been the inspiration for my child's future psychotherapy?*

All kidding aside, perhaps this is leading you to wonder: *Is how I'm parenting right now really the best I have to offer my kids?*

Let's face it. Raising kids in today's crazy culture is an incredible challenge! If parents were ever given an owner's manual with instructions on how to raise kids, it would be so much easier, wouldn't it?

As ministry leaders, we've spent the last 30 years working with thousands of kids. During this time, we've talked to many parents who said they desire to help their kids thrive and be successful, yet they don't feel confident as parents.

The problem is that most parents don't have a plan when it comes to raising their kids.

Without a plan, most parents default to what we call, Quick-Fix Parenting. This is the reactive, spontaneous, fly-by-the-seat-of-your-pants parenting. Here's what this quick-fix behavior modification might sound like: "Stop talking like

that!” or “Do your homework... or else!” or “Quit acting like your mother!”

At its foundation, Quick-Fix Parenting becomes about stopping your kid’s negative behavior *or* the agony connected to it — which is often the parent’s pain.

Using these quick fixes to solve problems does *not* help kids grow up to become healthy and independent young adults.

But, here’s the good news: It’s never too late to change as a parent, no matter if your kids are toddlers, tweens or teens.

You *can* become not just a good parent, but also an exceptional parent. How? By becoming an Intentional Parent.

This doesn’t mean being a perfect parent. There’s actually no such thing! We didn’t do everything right as parents either, but we did make the choice to fight against Quick-Fix Parenting in order to become Intentional Parents.

Along the way, we discovered 10 actions that are key to becoming intentional parents:

- 1) **Have strong belief.** Believe that you are the single greatest influence in your kid’s life and take responsibility for it. Believe that your role as a parent is so vital that you make your parenting a priority.
- 2) **Understand you are a 24/7 role model.** Make a deliberate choice to be vigilant about the examples you set for your kids by how you live your life. Realize that your behavior, speech and integrity are powerful teaching tools.
- 3) **Use encouraging words.** Encouraging words are positive, life giving, powerful, and memorable. They are like food for your child’s soul.
- 4) **Offer genuine affection.** Appropriate and regular physical affection gives kids more security, better self-esteem, and healthier emotional balance.
- 5) **Provide consistent presence.** Plan, strategize, and even sacrifice in order to be present in the lives of your kids.
- 6) **Create a peaceful home.** A peaceful home is a safe home, giving kids a shelter from the storms of life.
- 7) **Use delicate discipline.** Discipline and love go together; they provide kids with needed guidance, care and concern.
- 8) **Activate responsibility.** Provide opportunities for your children to develop responsibility and pursue healthy independence.
- 9) **Create positive memories.** For better or for worse, your kids will carry family memories into adulthood. Intentional parents pursue a path to ensure kids will have a flood of positive memories.
- 10) **Provide serious fun.** Work to nurture and model a home environment where laughter and fun is the rule, not the exception.

Although there is no one set of parenting principles that works for every child, we’re confident that if you apply these principles the odds of your children growing up to be healthy, independent, young adults will increase dramatically.

Doug and Cathy Fields

Doug & Cathy Fields have been married over 30 years and have 3 grown children. Their primary passion and joy have been family, but along the way they spent their years helping others — especially young people. They have worked at both Mariners and Saddleback Church in Southern California for three decades as youth, family, and teaching pastors. Doug is an author



of more than 60 books, consultant, co-founder of Downloadyouthministry.com, and is the Senior Director of the HomeWord Center for Youth & Family at Azusa Pacific University.

Cathy and Doug speak together on marriage and parenting and have more information available at www.DougFields.com. For more information on Intentional Parenting, visit IntentionalParenting.com.

- [Posts](#)
- [Website](#)
-
-