

Jacqueline Toussaint Levy

*7 Characteristics*  
of

**HIGHLY  
EFFECTIVE**

.....

*Parenting*



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Parents, it's our duty to rear our kids into productive citizens in society. Here are 7 characteristics that I pray will enhance your parenting skills.

## **Discipline**

Disciplining your child from toddlerhood on will save you many a headache down the road. The Bible says, "Spare the rod, spoil the child." I'm not talking about corporal punishment or child abuse. Discipline is defined as "*Training that corrects, molds, or perfects the mental faculties or moral character; Control gained by enforcing obedience or order; Orderly or prescribed conduct or pattern of behavior; Self-control.*" At 12 years of age, a child is set in his/her ways, and bad behavior is harder to break. Spending quality time with your child during the formative years is crucial. Spend time molding your child into the person you want him/her to become. Discipline is one of the most important fundamentals in raising a child. So, it is imperative to set rules for your child to follow from a young age. Provide an environment at home that encourages learning and that supports school activities. As stated previously, twelve years old is too late to start this process. Keep your children involved and invested in school, church and community activities which foster positive growth and happiness in him/her.

## **Respect Your Elders**

Respecting others is something our kids need to be taught. Kids will be kids. When they innocently or unknowingly disrespect an elder, they need correction to learn that it is unacceptable. A child will never learn from someone whom they do not respect. A powerful way to teach respect for others is by example. We should never speak ill of an authority figure in the presence of a child. My old grandmother used to say, "A child should stay in a child's place. There will be plenty enough time to be grown." Teaching children to respect others will benefit the community and society, as well as, the individual in the future. Instilling respect in your child is only teaching the child that an adult is in charge at school, church etc. I understand in this day and time some parents' judgment is in question. We should teach our kids when we place them in the hands of an adult, the adult is in charge. Now, if the child feels like they have been treated unfairly, teach

them to come to you, the parent, and not take the matter into their own hands. Teaching our children respect for our elders will benefit them greatly. Now we've got a child that will know how to be a good parent, employee, boss, etc.

## **Chores**

Parents, it's time for us to stand up and become the "odd ball." We need to stop giving our children everything and expecting nothing in return. Give your children chores to do. Many parents think, "I want my son/daughter to have a better childhood than I did." Chores teach children responsibility and how to take care of their belongings. Chores also help the kids feel more connected to the family. A child who has chores won't grow up expecting to have things handed to them on a silver platter because they will have learned that anything they want, they must earn. Nothing in life is free! Teach your children this lesson early in life.

We need to teach our kids to live below their means. Give them a weekly allowance to buy all the latest gadgets they desire. You may find that they will not be so eager to spend money as if it's growing on a tree. They will value what they have worked to save and purchase. Not many people value what's just handed to them on a silver platter.

## **Education Is Important**

We need to be encouraging our children to become good students. Teach them to value their education. Explain to your child that it is his/her job as a child to go to school and to work hard and get good grades. Now, to be honest, many of us parents did not make all A's in school, so it is also important to not put too much stress on our kids to do so.

In America, most schools operate for an average of 180 days with holidays and the summer months off. In other countries, the school year can last up to 240 days. Children can still be learning on the days that they are not in school. One important and vital activity that can extend learning for children is reading. Require your child to read every day. It is the single most important skill that a parent can foster to help their children succeed in school. Reading is the key to lifelong learning.

Some tips to help raise children who love to read include:

- Start at birth by reading to your child as often as possible
- Provide your child with a variety of books or magazines
- Enroll in literacy programs through the school or public library

## **Be Aware Of Your Child's Feelings**

Gone are the good old days when kids went to school and felt safe, nurtured and secure. Bullying and childhood depression rates are rising, and drug use and violence are creeping uncomfortably closer to the school yard. Parents must be vigilant and attentive to pick up on the clues that their child may be in trouble or hurting. The children may not be at ease confiding in their parents about what is happening to them. Parents need to be watchful and observant for signs such as:

- The child not wanting to go to school
- Grades dropping
- Changes in eating and sleeping patterns

Cyberbullying is a form of harassment that utilizes the internet through unwanted emails or text messages and through social media, such as, Facebook, Twitter and Snapchat. L.A.W. Publications is a useful resource to learn more about cyberbullying.

When a child is having difficulty communicating, sleeping, or socializing with friends, you may need to seek assistance from a mental health provider to determine whether or not your child may be depressed. Your local school system employs many professionals that can help you and your child, such as, the School Counselor, the School Social Worker or the School Psychologist.

When your child talks to you, listen to them closely. Let him/her speak and do not rush them or interrupt to ask questions or to give your opinion. Give undivided attention and use restatement to clarify and make sure that you understand what they are telling you. Strategies like these also let your child know that you care about them and are open to listening to them.

## **Putting Your Child First**

At some point, the day to day routine of parenting will come to an end for all of us as our children become adults. Make raising your child your priority while you are still doing the raising. Give them a strong foundation on which to grow by providing discipline, teaching them to respect others, and to value education. Being a parent does not come with a manual. We all do the best that we can with what we have. Help your child to develop respect and compassion for other people, and you will be building a person who will be thoughtful, honest and caring. Just as important as guiding our children academically is how faithfully we educate them in the values of our society. Values such as, "Giving an honest day's work for an honest day's pay," "Love thy neighbor," or "Take responsibility for your actions," are important.

In word and deed, parents, we play a very important role in helping our children develop a sense of good and bad and of right and wrong. I'm sure that all would agree that raising a child is the biggest accomplishment of your life.

## **Lead by Example**

Lastly, but most importantly, highly effective parents lead by example by teaching their children it's more blessed and beneficial to become the best version of themselves. A few ways in which parents can do that is; First, by teaching there is a creator out there watching all that we do. Secondly, stay closely connected to family. Thirdly, strive to be an asset to their family, community and country.

There are many principles to effective parenting. These are the seven that I've been reared up on. I tried to instill these principles in my children. With that being said "Happy Parenting."

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## **Other Books By Jacqueline Toussaint Levy**

*Fighting For My Child's Life: How To Be An Advocate For Your Child*

*90 Days of Affirmations and Prayers: For a Mother with a Special Needs Child*

## Meet Your Parent Advocate



Jacqueline Levy has raised two grown children, one with schizophrenia. She is a paraprofessional in her local school system for the past 14 years. She worked with severe and profound kids. Jacqueline studied Early Childhood Development at her local university. She has over 200 hours in continuing education in childcare. Jacqueline is a Volunteer Court Appointed Social Worker CASA Worker. Jacqueline has also worked in group homes.

### *A Message from your Parent Advocate:*

I am ready and capable to help you achieve the utmost rewarding life that your child can receive. Allow me to help you alleviate some of your pain and stress, and help you look forward to a brighter future for your child. When things look so bleak, let me teach you how to be a voice and make a statement on behalf of your disabled child.