

TIP SHEET: Power of Positive Parenting

For the parent

Being a parent is one of the hardest jobs and there are no easy answers. The most important thing is to raise your child so she is happy, healthy and safe, while also staying positive about your own life and needs.

Here are some tips for being a positive parent:

- Appreciate the value of play. Play with your children whenever you can. Play can prevent discipline problems, it's a great way for children to learn and is very important for building a positive relationship between you and your child.
- Talk with and listen to your child. It's important to make eye contact and use gentle touch when communicating with your child.
- Remember the importance of non-verbal communication, and be sure to hold your child to comfort them.
- Build your child's brain and body. Provide healthy meals and snacks and model good eating habits. Encourage exercise by being active with your child.
- Learn how your child learns and how she may be unique from other children. Know all areas of your child's development—physical, intellectual, social, emotional and moral—and remember there is nothing to be ashamed of if she needs special help to progress at her own best rate.
- Cherish your child's individuality. Praise your children's differences and avoid comparing them or asking why they can't be like someone else.
- Set your household up for success—make it work for the whole family. Model and teach good safety habits and establish routines. Discuss and enforce family rules that work for your household—for example, putting toys away after play.
- Take care of yourself. If you are tired, ill or just worn out, you cannot be an effective parent. Eat healthy, get enough sleep, take occasional breaks from parenting if possible, and enlist the support of family, friends and neighbors when things seem overwhelming. You can also find support through parenting groups.
- Make time for family activities. A sense of belonging is enhanced when families take time to engage in common activities such as having meals together.
- Teach your child right from wrong. A child's understanding of right and wrong develops slowly, from within. Actively teach your children a code of moral conduct and lay the groundwork for him to develop his own morals.

