

TIP SHEET FOR RELATIVES AS PARENTS

INCORPORATING QUALITY TIME INTO YOUR SCHEDULE

Each day brings new activities, new struggles and new joys. Sometimes, we are so busy that we forget to take time each day to be with and enjoy one another. It may be difficult to set aside time each day as quality time, but you can make it a goal. This tip sheet will give you ideas on how to find quality time together with your children.

So what is quality time? Quality time is time (as little as 15 minutes) that you spend with your children. They talk to you and you listen to them. You talk to them and they listen to you.

Meal times

- Use meal time to talk with your kids about the day and to listen to what went on in their lives.
- Your kids can help you prepare the meals and you can teach them some of your secrets in the kitchen. If time allows, let them prepare a dessert or assist with setting the table or cleaning up after.

Before and After Naps and Bed Time

- Right before nap or bed time help kids to relax, you can read books, tell them a story or sing songs together.
- Right after naps can be a time when kids are waking up and in slow mode, which can be a nice time to cuddle and rock. For others, this is a grumpy time and giving them space may be what's needed.

Bath Time

- If your kids are still small enough that you supervise baths, you can use that time for fun conversation, and to listen to them. Fun shaped soaps may even put a smile on those resistant to bath time.

Car Time or Bus Time

- Many of us drive a tremendous amount. This provides a opportunity for you and your kids to connect.
- A lot of parents find that kids will just naturally open up if given the chance to talk without being interrupted or asked a "million" questions. So make car time a chance for your kids to talk to you.
- Some parents use car time to ask their kids really hard questions, but this can shut down the lines of communication as kids may feel like they are trapped. Instead, let your kids talk. Leave the hard questions for another time.

T.V. and Movie Time

- Some days we don't have the energy or the time to do anything extra. Watching TV together is fine when done in moderation. It gives you shared time which may be rare with teenagers.

It is important to remember that quality time doesn't need to be an extra special activity or an extremely long activity. It is time to help build the bonds of attachment and love with your child.

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