

Science Says These Habits Lead to Great Outcomes in Raising Successful Kids

In his continuously updated free e-book, *How to Raise Successful Kids*, Bill Murphy, Jr. has created this short list of a few of the most interesting and useful studies that he's found, and the habits they suggest for successful parenting:

1. Don't let up on them.

This is a difficult one, and it goes right to the core of many parents' frustration. But in short: Set high expectations, and be consistent in your messaging, even when you get eye-rolling (or worse) in reply. This tip is based on a study out of Great Britain that looked at 15,000 young women over 10 years, which found that kids whose parents "habitually reminded them of their high expectations," were more likely to obtain a college education, and less likely to be unemployed for long periods of time as adults.

2. Praise them like this.

Parents often praise their kids, quite naturally, for their talents, saying things like: You're so smart (or talented, etc.)! You're so kind and good to people! In short, don't do that. Or, at least, don't only do that. The work of Stanford University psychology professor Carol Dweck has shown that it's far more effective over time to praise kids for the effort they put into things, as opposed to their innate abilities.

3. Do it more often than you might think.

A study out of Brigham Young University looked at praise and criticism in elementary school classes. Researchers sat in on 20-minute classroom sessions over and over again for three years, tracking how teachers interacted with 2,536 students between kindergarten and first grade. In short, the more thoughtful praise teachers gave the students, the better they performed, regardless of other factors. Of course, this is in the classroom, not the home. But ask yourself: Do I respond better over time to thoughtful praise, or to criticism?

4. Make them do chores.

The Harvard Grant Study, which is the longest running longitudinal study in history, found two keys that people need in order to be happy and successful: Love and work ethic. Here we focus on the second one, because the consensus from the study about how to develop work ethic is to form a "pitch-in mindset" as a kid. And the key way to develop that mindset is to be required as a child to do household chores.

5. Rush to their side.

This study solves a dilemma that a lot of parents face at times. It goes like this: If my child gets hurt, or makes a mistake, or faces a big challenge, should I?

a. Rush to his or her side, offering consolation?

b. Maintain a bit of distance, so as to help them learn to be self-reliant?

A survey of several studies leads to a single conclusion: Rush to their side and offer consolation. This doesn't mean "solve all their problems for them," but it means express empathy, and let them know clearly that you care.

Source: Bill Murphy Jr. for Inc.com and author of the free e-book, How to Raise Successful Kids (7th Edition).