

50 SUGGESTIONS FOR PASTORS
If You Want Children who Love the Ministry
By Dr. Gene Wood

Infancy/Toddlers

1. Rock them to sleep when they are crying at night.
2. When you are home, spend lots of time on the floor.
3. Play fort under the table or under the bed.
4. Sacrifice so your wife can stay at home (for 12-15 years).
5. When you arrive home, always pick them up.
6. Play “horsey.” Let them ride on your back.
7. Tell them “no” and mean it.
8. Kiss them and hug them several times each day.
9. Be home for dinner.
10. Choose a godly mother for them and make her feel appreciated.

Preschool

1. Read to them often.
2. Enforce “no.” Let them know you love them too much to allow disobedience.
3. Spank them when they rebel.
4. Hold them after you spank them and explain why punishment was necessary.
5. Have daily family devotions. While you do this, hold them on your lap.
6. When they run to greet you, send a clear message they are loved and your priority.
Pick them up.
7. Watch them ride their big wheels.
8. Tuck them in every night and pray with them.
9. If you get home late, go to their bed and stroke their cheeks. Tell them you love them and pray for them.
10. Watch them play.

Early Grade School

1. Take them the first day. Go ahead and cry.
2. Try to arrange your schedule to take them to school every day.
3. *Talk* to them. Don't just "be with" them. Ask questions.
4. Go for hikes in the woods. Play army.
5. Go on father-son camp outs.
6. Go on dates to fancy restaurants with your daughters.
7. Teach them how to have personal devotions as they begin second grade.
8. When you go into their room to say "good night" and pray, sit on the bed. Become friends.
9. Throw the ball. Play dolls/house. Let them sit on your back while you swim. Laugh a lot.
10. Begin to plan real vacations. Talk about them and take pictures.

Later Grade School

1. Make family nights a priority.
2. If they choose to be involved in athletics/music, be at their events. Put them on your calendar.
3. Offer to coach their activities.
4. Continue your good night conversations.
5. Let them be kids. Let them hug you and kiss you goodbye.
6. Tell them daily, "I love you."
7. Tell them you are praying for the godly man or woman who God has chosen to be their mate.
8. Openly display your love for your wife.
9. Continue to expect obedience. Spank them if open rebellion surfaces.
10. Frequently tell them how much you love ministry.

Junior High

1. Monitor and discuss their private devotional life.
2. Let them know that the choice of their friends will be the single biggest determiner of their spiritual success.
3. Make your presence at school and extra-curricular activities a high priority.
4. Continue family devotions.
5. Continue to tell them good night and pray with them.
6. Make these years of family nights and vacations the most special ever. They are drawing to a close.
7. Begin discussions about dating.
8. Discourage television viewing at night. Encourage the family to talk.
9. Discipline in ways other than spanking, but demand obedience.
10. Give them increased privacy. If they don't want you in their room each night, respect this.

High School

1. Insist they be active in their youth group, even if they are critical sometimes. Always support your youth pastor.
2. Avoid any criticism of church people, *especially* leadership.
3. Cancel whatever you need to in order to attend their events, even if they say they don't care. Cancel unnecessary travel.
4. Give them space to "individualize" as long as they don't cross biblical boundaries.
5. Let them see you develop close relationships with their teachers and friends' parents.
6. Participate in man type activities with your son: wrestle, arm wrestle, lift weights, bang bodies.
7. Stay in good physical shape. This *is* important to both your sons and daughters.
8. Let your daughters know you think they are terrific. Listen to them by the hour and look in their eyes.
9. When you're home at night, turn off the television. Sit in the family room (without a book). Just because you're available does not mean they will talk, but they never will if you are not available.
10. Pray for them daily.

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