**Spend quality time with your children**

* Every relationship needs to be given care and attention, Parents can find this a challenge as their own responsibilities of work and home can mean we are not always there for our children. Try to find a balance. The activity doesn’t need to be expensive, just some quality time to chat and share can show our children they are valued in your life.

**Express your love and affection**

* Children are never given too much love, however material gifts are not a good way of demonstrating your love. Show your love by giving commitment which means you might have had to go out of your way to attend an event important to them or to sit without interruption and listen to them even when we have a million jobs to do. This means the world to children and costs nothing.

**Do as I say and not as I do**

* This is a terrible way to be a role model for our children. You cannot expect a child to be everything you are not. Whatever you want for your child, set the good example. Think about what kind of adult you would like them to grow into and ask yourself are you being the best role model you can be?

**Building a child’s self-esteem and resilience.**

* A child’s self-esteem is vital to them becoming an emotionally healthy adult. A child with a high self-esteem will believe they can achieve more than a child with poor self-esteem, who sees themselves as a burden, unimportant, unloved and not good enough. Building strong resilience in children will help them to face challenges or when things don’t go right, pick themselves up to try again.

**Set limits and be consistent with discipline**

* Children need routines and discipline, learning the right habits from early on will pay off in the long run. Ensure you remain firm on “none negotiable” things, an example could be using manners at all times or getting to school on time. If your child knows you cannot be broken by tantrums or sulking they are more likely to conform. Too many rules are stifling and often children rebel, chose a few rules and stick to them.

**Make sure the punishments are fair, appropriate and prompt**

* Children will need punishments and sanctions imposing at some point, children naturally push boundaries and they need you to be calm and in control. Sanctions are best applied when the child can win them back, grounding children can be effective but for short periods, they must be allowed to win back privileges, this also applies to also removal of electrical gadgets.

**If you say you are going to do it do it!**

* Never make threats you cannot carry out, “if you carry on I’m going to kill you” is not helpful. However “if you carry on playing your music that loud I will take it off you” is more helpful. Let them know exactly what the issue is and whats going to happen if they chose to carry on. Remember it is their choice, nobody is making them misbehave.

**Don’t make excuses for poor behaviour**

* If you excuse poor behaviour you are signing up for trouble. Blaming a child’s friends can also deflect the responsibility for your own child’s poor behaviour. Discuss with the child what happened and discuss why the behaviour isn’t acceptable, sometimes a discussion is affective, at other times sanctions may be a better choice. It’s a good idea to be able to escalate sanctions, for example confiscation of a mobile is effective, and you may not need to confiscate everything but may end up doing so if the child carries on with the poor behaviour.

**If you are in a relationship don’t let your partner make you be the bad cop or you them**

* Decide on your boundaries as a team and back each other up, “wait till your father gets home” is never a good idea. Stick to your rules, you are the adult and deal with it there and then. Never disagree in front of your children, if you disagree, discuss privately and resolve.

**Be reasonable and cast your mind back to how it was to be a child**

* There aren’t many of us who sailed through adolescence, most of us thought our parents unfair or thought they didn’t understand us at some point and perhaps we were right. Your children may feel just the same, communication is vital to happiness and harmony within the family. Enjoy these times as much as you can because they won’t be children forever.