



# 5 PARENTING TIPS

Crystal Bowman, LMFT  
@crystalbowmantherapy

## ✓ 1. *Prioritize Connection*

Kids will not listen to us, unless they feel connected to us. We can invest in our relationship with our children by listening, showing interest in their interests, trusting them, celebrating their wins, and showing them we love them.

## 2. *Regulate Your Own Emotion First* ✓

You can not help a child regulate their emotions if you yourself are not regulated. Self-regulation often involves doing something with your own body. Some examples are, taking a hot shower, going for a walk, taking deep breaths, shaking it out, resting, using your 5 senses, or having an ice cold drink. Find what works for you.

## ✓ 3. *Recognize Normal Development Behaviors*

Often, parents are concerned by and react to behaviors from their child that are actually fairly typical and normal for their child's developmental age. Two steps in parenting that are too often forgotten are to talk to your children about what your expectations are for them AND what is normal for their age. For example, a parent teaches a child not to lie, but can also explain that it makes sense that the child might have felt scared about getting in trouble and therefore didn't tell the truth.

## 4. *Find a Balance of Structure and Flexibility* ✓

Effective parenting is balancing structure and guidelines with flexibility. Research shows that parenting too rigidly often increases rebellious and/or sneaky behavior.

Research also shows that parents who enable often have a child with stunted emotional and mental growth, resulting in children making dangerous choices.

Balance is where it's at!

## ✓ 5. *Remember the Goodnes of Your Child*

Don't confuse misbehavior with thinking your child is bad. Your child is a good child who is feeling anxious, disappointed, angry, tired, etc. Thinking this way will help you respond in ways that align with your hopes for good parenting. This will also help communicate to your child that they are good, despite their behavior. In fact, try to "catch" your kids (even your teens and young adults) doing good, then bring it to their attention, and watch what happens!