

solutions

A FAMILY AFFAIR

The best way to teach your children the importance of New Year's resolutions is by making it part of a family tradition. As you begin 2017, parents and children are encouraged to reflect on the past year to remember the ways they have acted in the best interests of themselves and their family members.

According to Dr. Benjamin Siegel, professor of pediatrics and psychiatry at Boston University School of Medicine, many of us are too quick to be self-critical and forget all the positive things we have done. To begin the process, Dr. Siegel suggests saying, "Each one of us is going to state a few things that we want to continue to do and things we'd like to change in the upcoming year that would make us feel better about ourselves and how our family works." Effective School Solutions offers the following examples of New Year's resolutions designed to enhance the quality of your family life:

1. **Say "Yes" More.** Try saying "yes" more to spending quality family time and doing things together.
2. **Say "No" More.** Consider cutting back on electronic gadget use. Set a goal of spending at least one day a month (if not per week) unplugged and instead, substitute other activities that you all can enjoy.
3. **Worry Less.** Keeping kids safe is a priority, but don't let your worries dictate how you live your lives. Creating a plan to prevent and respond to emergencies can prepare you all to explore the world safely.
4. **Listen More; Talk at Less.** Ask each other, "What do you think? What are you feeling? Tell me about it. What would you do?"
5. **Negotiate Less; Explain More.** Children deserve to know the thinking behind parents' decisions and expectations, even if they are not equal partners at the bargaining table.
6. **Expect a Little More.** In the New Year, expect more from each other, like respect, responsibility, manners, kindness, and all of the goodness that lies within you and your kids.
7. **Expect a Little Less.** Be okay with a little less constant scheduling and "enrichment filled" days. Children need a lot of slow to grow. Each family member can prepare a weekly schedule that aims to be more balanced and realistic.
8. **Connect More.** Take steps to maintain friendships, and extend yourselves to stay connected to family, the community, those less fortunate, and the natural world.
9. **Explore Simple Health Goals.** Commit to developing a doable number of healthy habits like drinking more water, getting one more hour of sleep, and eating at least one healthy snack every day.
10. **Make a Family Pact.** Say what you mean and mean what you say.

Effective School Solutions wishes you and your family a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Resources:

<http://www.brighthorizons.com/family-resources/e-family-news/2012-ten-new-years-resolutions-for-parents/#sthash.F9Qxd9YV.dpuf>

www.pbs.org/parents/holidays/making-new-years-resolutions - By Laura Lewis Brown

PARENTS MATTER: In 2017, resolve to be more playful, more patient, and more present with your children.