



February Parenting Notes

Greg and Sue Johnson

In our parenting class last month we learned about the 40 developmental assets and the importance of these assets for our children. Number one in the list is family support. Sometimes this can be difficult if one parent is not around because of business travel, military service, illness, divorce or a variety of other reasons. We can help our children during these times if we put into practice some of the suggestions below.¹

Dealing with Worry

Children worry. Even if it's not obvious, they may be experiencing emotions of sadness, loneliness, and fear. It is important during these times to be truthful with them while not exposing them to unnecessary adult situations. Important: Reinforce the truth found in Christ. (1 CO 5:8, 1 CO 13:6)

Tip 1: The reason for the parent's absence should be explained in a way that the children can understand.

Tip 2: When away, a parent can call, email, or send postcards and letters.

Tip 3: Ask your children how they feel and allow them to ask questions.

Tip 4: Remind your children often of Christ's love for them and the absent parent. Describe God's protection.

Maintain Discipline and Routine

Children, like adults, will want to get their own way. They may use the opportunity of an absent parent to test the boundaries previously established. Resist the temptation to be lax or to spoil your children. It is important that the children continue to be taught to respect authority. (PR 13:24)

Tip 1: Respond to every situation that needs discipline. (PR 29:15, 17)

Tip 2: Don't compensate for an absent parent through overindulgence, including TV/video games.

Tip 3: Help your child keep a positive attitude toward the missing parent.

Tip 4: Children should help around the house but be careful assigning "adult responsibilities".

Tip 5: Trust/Thank God. Pray/Study the Bible with your children. Deepen ties with Disciples.

Tip 6: Look for opportunities to laugh and play with your children. Create joy in your home.

¹ BSF International