



Parking Lot Rules & 75 Other Ideas for Raising Amazing Children

Tom Sturges

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How do you raise amazing children? How do you teach them to be kind and honest, insightful and inquisitive, athletic and curious, loving and thoughtful? How do you give your child the courage to be a good sport, a good sibling, a good friend, a good person?

When Tom Sturges became a father, he wanted to be the greatest father who ever walked the earth. “I wanted to be so much more than a casual observer of my son’s life as it went by me.” So Sturges asked a lot of questions. He picked up ideas, advice, and tips from parents, grandparents, even rock stars and sports legends—anyone who had unique insights to share. The result is this practical, inspiring “rule book” for raising healthy, happy, safe, cherished children. Philosophical, sensible, and empowering, these 76 ideas subscribe to a simple premise: It is impossible to respect a child too much, but it is worth the effort to try. The rules are organized into seven fields, arranged by subject, and will help parents, mentors, coaches, and anyone who has children, to deal with an array of situations in a kind, respectful, and encouraging way.

- **EVERYDAY:** Let your children feel welcome and loved from the first moment he or she walks into a room. “Smile When You See Him” (rule #4) and leave no doubt that, at that moment, your child is the most important person in your world.
- **COMMUNICATING:** Since yelling parents intimidate, and a calm tone inspires, “When You Get Upset, Whisper” (rule #22) –and make sure your message is heard.
- **MANNERS MATTERS:** Follow “The Bill Walton Rule,” (rule #34) and if you can’t be on time, be early.
- **NO LOST CHILDREN:** When a family or group travels together, obey “The Caboose Rule” (rule #43) by assigning an adult or older child to keep up the rear—and ensure that no little ones lag behind.
- **DISCIPLINES AND PUNISHMENTS:** “The 10-Second Rule” (rule #49) prescribes the minimum amount of time you should wait before thinking about punishing your child for that D in English.
- **PAIN HAPPENS, NOW WHAT?:** After your child experiences a little cut, bump, or scrape, say “Squeeze My Hand as Much as It Hurts” (rule #62); it is remarkable how their being able to “show” you will help to ease his or her pain.
- **PLAY SPORTS, PERIOD:** When your children accomplish something great in their sports, using “The ESPN Rule,” (rule #67) tell the story in intimate detail and fill them with the belief that they can do it again and again.

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Brian Mejia:

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