Purposeful Parenting Pointers



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by Erik Youngman, Guest Blogger

Purposeful parenting pointers provide potential parameters to ponder. Parenting could be considered the most difficult job because of the constantly changing variables. However, parenting is also extremely rewarding. Parents can support children success and healthy social-emotional growth in a variety of ways. While appreciating the monumental lifetime responsibilities of parenting, readers are encouraged to reflect about these potential parenting pointers to provide options to consider at different times for different children.

I frequently tell my three daughters and other students to be patient, polite, positive, and persistent. Enjoy reading additional words that begin with the letter “p” that will help parents empower children.

Patient

Model how to be patient while waiting or working for more positive outcomes. Focus on what you can control while deliberately thinking and behaving as efficiently or effectively as possible. Recognize when you and/or your children can have an impact on the short- or long-term disappointing outcomes as you continue to focus on your effort, attitude, and focus.

Positivity

Having an optimistic and positive mindset can shape initial reactions during challenging situations and will likely be replicated by children in future scenarios. Openly discuss emotions and empower hope as you ensure children understand that you are there to listen so that they are not alone. Be positive about experiences and potential frustrations with family, friends, teachers, and athletic experiences. Easier said than done at times, but recognize when it would be best to not sweat the small stuff.

Polite

Model and empower politeness by focusing on empathy, kindness, and gratitude (EKG). There are multiple ways to measure a person’s heart and how much they care. Modeling and empowering empathy, kindness, and gratitude creates a foundation for conversations and interactions. Discuss benefits of showing empathy for others during challenging situations; kindness for self and others; and gratitude for opportunities, support,

experiences, and relationships.

Persistence

Regardless if you call it persistence, resilience, or grit, model and empower learning from mistakes, challenges, misunderstandings, and rejection. Keep trying different strategies and focusing on improvement when you have not accomplished something YET. Pause for a moment to analyze options, be courageous, and enhance your focus, effort, and attitude. Persistence will help children as they embrace and learn from mistakes, challenges, misunderstandings, and rejection that happen daily and weekly while participating in coding, science, math, writing, athletics, music, acting, and collaboration.

Peaceful

Help establish routines and structures that empower times of quiet and peace. Model self-care and how to relax. Examples include limiting electronics, creating quiet places to calm down, establishing bedtime routines to ensure appropriate sleep, and engaging in family meals or games.

Praised

Praise children’s effort, attitude, and growth. Provide feedback that is specific, forward-thinking and timely to inspire grit, growth, reflection, innovation, and tenacity. Provide feedback that targets the activity, thinking, and self-regulation to encourage correction of

misconceptions, empower transfer of learning, and reflection about thinking (metacognition).

Proud

Tell your children that you love them and frequently specify why you are proud of them. Enhancing pride enhances calculated risk-taking and builds confidence, courage, poise, and a focus on continuous improvement by getting better on every attempt and iteration. Proudly make and keep promises to your children and empower them to do the same to empower ownership and finishing what was started or given your word to complete.

Passion

Seek to understand your children’s passions and insecurities. Curiously ask questions, listen to responses, and observe them in different situations to see topics and activities that result in smiles, engagement, wonder, and passion. Empower your children to discover potential interests they can be passionate about as a child, not necessarily what you were passionate about as a child.

Purposeful

Parents should model and empower purposeful actions to raise their children to become well-adjusted adults. Model how to reflectively learn from every interaction and to understand that they must responsibly and respectfully work to earn things in life.

Preparation

Parents should model and empower focusing on variables that can be controlled. Being organized and prepared to participate in activities allows children to engage in activities rather than being frustrated because they are late or not prepared with necessary resources. Example areas to target include healthy eating choices, empowering children to get dressed by themselves while also doing their daily hygiene routines and preparing teenagers to use an alarm clock so they are responsible for getting ready each day. Teaching your children how to prepare themselves a healthy breakfast and pack a lunch for school and having all of their school supplies ready when they leave for school also teaches responsibility that can continue to be enhanced as children grow older.

Productive Progress

Model how to recognize, appreciate, and empower incremental progress via reflection, goal setting, and self-assessment. Focus on progress and quality rather than perfection.

Process

Focus on choices, strategies, adaptability, and growth during the process rather than only the result. Reflect about your impact, effort, attitude, and interactions with others. Appreciate analysis of mistakes or growth, learning, progress, changes, or opportunities.

Parameters

Establish limits that also provide children with ownership. Give children opportunities to surprise you and themselves, and never underestimate them. Establish routines and traditions, spend time with them, introduce them to games and activities, and choose your battles based on safety, frequency, and impact.

Problem-solving

Rather than you solving every problem, help younger children learn how to solve problems and react while you can still give them pointers and support. Solving problems for them all of the time diminishes the learning opportunities that will be needed as they get older and take responsibility for amplified impacts. Empower autonomy, agency, ownership, strategizing, reflection, and communication skills to decrease disagreements while enhancing awareness of when to ask for help. Guide, teach, and explain options and impacts rather than making every decision for children. Help children understand the relationship between demonstrating more responsibility and earning more trust and autonomy.

Partnerships

Explain benefits of partnering with others to impact positive outcomes. Teach children collaboration, teamwork, leadership, and how to understand different perspectives while promoting others.

Play

One of the best parts of being a parent is playing with your children. Empower creativity, taking calculated risks, smiling, and having fun. Splash in puddles, dance in the rain, creatively make messy art projects, experiment with baking and cooking, play sports in the mud, daydream, draw, take funny pictures, and listen to music. You can wash the messes away, but the memories will stay.

Presence

Be present and teach your children critical, polite, and appropriate times to make eye contact and listen. Put your device down and give them your full attention. Enjoy family meals and help your children spend more energy and awareness in the moment rather than worrying about the future. Learn from your kids while also helping them learn. Children grow up fast so savor moments, hugs, smiles, and laughter.

Pivot

Model and empower pivoting or adapting to the changing times and circumstances. Expect the unexpected while being prepared to change strategies, directions, or perspectives. Benefits include enhancing confidence, courage, creativity, flexibility, and leadership.

Ponder

Curiously and creatively hypothesize and reflect about

lessons learned from experiences. Reflect about continuous improvement, empathy, kindness, gratitude, and about feedback to empower your children to be teachable, coachable, and approachable.

Polished

Help children understand different times when their appearance or work should be polished. Help them recognize that their dress and hygiene is more important during particular situations. Similarly, there are times when feedback and experiences should lead to polished presentations, quality work, excellent performance, and best efforts.

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Purposeful parenting pointers provide potential phenomenal parameters to ponder and practice. What are your reactions and success stories about these parenting pointers? I would love to hear feedback and questions via Twitter (@Erik_Youngman) so we can continue reflective conversations about purposeful parenting. Share this blog with a fellow parent and discuss what might be helpful for your children in the coming years to prepare them to be well-adjusted adults.

Dr. Erik Youngman’s Biography

Dr. Erik Youngman is an education leader who is passionate about topics such as homework, growth mindset, grading, and leadership. Published books he has written include, “The Magic of Growth Mindset,” and

“12 Characteristics of Deliberate Homework,” as well as a chapter for, “100 No-Nonsense Things That All Teachers Should Stop Doing.” Erik has also written numerous blogs about growth mindset and grading.

This is his twenty-first year in educational leadership. Erik is the Assistant Superintendent for Libertyville District 70 in Libertyville, Illinois. Previous education experiences include being a principal in Libertyville as well as an assistant principal and teacher in Gurnee, Illinois.

Erik earned a Doctorate in Educational Leadership, Education Specialist Degree, and Master of Science in Education from Northern Illinois University and a Bachelor of Arts from Augustana College. Please follow and contact Erik via Twitter @Erik_Youngman or his website: ErikYoungman.com