

Simplicity Parenting Highlights

from lecture given by Kim John Payne
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In a nutshell Simplicity Parenting starts with the concept that simpler is better; less is more; and work hard, but play hard too.

Things to consider

- Reduce stress. Stress is cumulative.
- Reduce screen time. Children average a total of 7 1/2 hours per day of “screen time” (tv, computer, itouch, Wii, etc.). Neurological studies show this damages kids and have found it can be addictive. You can control this at home, but no where else.
- Stress on children results in their lovable quirks turning into their biggest issues (like obsessive behaviors, bullying tendency, etc).
- Research shows kids brains can't deal well with stress so the body reacts and puberty may come earlier.

Where to begin Simplifying

1. De-clutter your environment: books, toys (remove animated toy), clothes. Simple toys trigger the brain to be creative and helps children learn to negotiate, collaborate, innovate and be flexible. When fewer books are available, they're read more deeply and processed more fully. If possible, cycle toys and books (keep some set aside and rotate occasionally).

2. Improve rhythm and predictability.

- Rhythm (do it together, warm, happy) vs Routine (do it right - if not, punished). Ask your kids their best memories - hopefully it starts something like "every Sunday WE ..." Good memories should be about 'connection - to nature, to person, to self'. Out of the “we” experiences comes “I am”.
- Sweat the small stuff. Model for your child. It may take you 5 minutes to show your child how to fold the towel and hang it up when he/she is 2, but by 5 he/she will be doing it themselves. Include your children in your chores and errands. Let them learn, contribute and build stronger relationships.
- It's ok to be bored. Boredom leads to creativity. Don't feel compelled to offer your children ideas; let them find their own inspiration and creativity. Eventually they will come up with something.

3. De-clutter schedule and have more downtime. Kids need time to process images and information from their days. 1/3 of kids time should be boredom. This leads to more creative and deeper playing.

4. Filter out adult conversation. Teach your children it's a beautiful world. Don't burden them with adult issues. They don't need to be citizens of the world at age 7. Ask yourself, "Is it true, is it necessary, is it kind?" before sharing something with your children. Don't share it if your answer is "no".

Another interesting article, that supports the message from Kim John Payne...
<http://www.greatschools.org/parenting/5286-how-stress-affects-your-child.gs?page=all>