

What are parenting values?

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Lisa here. Last week, Sarah talked to you about values- what they are and why we need them. This week we're applying that idea to your parenting values. Just like your personal values, these are not moral or religious values. They are also not the values you are trying to teach your children. Parenting values are the qualities and characteristics that you want to possess or demonstrate *as a parent*. There may be some overlap with your personal values, but there will be some specific characteristics that only apply to your parenting.

Parenting values are about the kind of parent you want to be. Your parenting values affect everything from your parenting behaviors to how you relate to your children. For instance, it might be important to you to be a parent who creates an environment where your children can tell you anything without judgment. It might also be important to you to be a parent who prioritizes discipline and following the rules. Your parenting values are your compass, guiding the direction you're heading in terms of your parenting.



Another key thing to know about parenting values is that all your values will not be of equal importance to you. There are some qualities that are critical to you. These are central to how you view yourself as a parent. Then there are some values you hold, but that are less important. For example, you might value being a fun, laid back parent *and* a parent who enforces rules and discipline. Although you may hold both values, they likely will not have the same level of importance and will get different priority in your interactions with your children.

Just like your personal values, parenting values are unique to each caregiver. They are based on what is most important to you as a parent. Some of your parenting values are ones you have adopted consciously and work hard to show in your interactions with your children. These are the ones that are easiest for you to identify because you have thought about them and have been intentional in expressing them.



However, you may be less aware of many of your parenting values. These are the values you have unconsciously adopted from other sources. A major influence on your parenting values, as I'm sure you know, is your own parents. If you have ever had a moment where you hear your own parents' words coming out of your mouth, this might mean that some of their values have transferred to you.

Other influences on your parenting values are other parents that you know, parents in pop culture, and even some fictional parents from TV shows and movies. Whatever the influences on your parenting values, it is important to be aware of what your values truly are and to be intentional about which values you prioritize. We'll talk more about that in future posts. For now, start thinking about your own parenting values and how you express them on a day-to-day basis.

Thanks for joining us! Next week, we'll talk some more about why defining and understanding your parenting values is so important.