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Ask Dr. Harold Holidays

By Dr. Harold Hoyle, Ph.D.



www.drharoldhoyle.com Harold can be contacted by phone or email: 510-219-8660 hjhoyle@mac.com Harold is licensed clinical psychologist and a lecturer and in the School of Counseling Psychology, Education, and Pastoral Ministries Santa Clara University. With his wife and two children he is a 14 year long resident of the Lamorinda area. He is a sought after speaker in the areas of parenting, education, behavior with adolescents and children. He has a local small private practice.

rest of their life. They just want to be with you. So your challenge is to separate your doing from your being. You might be able to fix something for them if they make a mistake but it is possible that they just need you to be with them during their mistake. This is done most commonly by listening. So plan big chunks of time and just be with your kids; you will have plenty of time to fix things and tell lessons later in life.

Get outside

It is very difficult to find a psychological publication that does not include a new study talking about how exercise and being outside aids in stress reduction and mental health. Hike, walk, bike, play, and do as much of these types of activities with your kids as you can. Do these things even if the kids are looking at you and saying, "Really dad? You want me to do what?" And do them without saying this will be good for you or a good lesson for you.

Maybe you can plan an intergenerational activity that is done outside and no one makes it into a lesson. Give it a try and send me the

I recently did a parenting talk at an elementary school and during the questions a parent asked, "What do you recommend I do with my kids during the holidays?" So here are a few suggestions for holiday time for families.

Plan for family

One of the less healthy dynamics in the modern American family is the lack of intergenerational interaction at holidays. Sociologists tell us that our sense of community has decreased with the amount people move and the lack of interaction we have with our extended families. Plan to have activities for the kids to do with the grand parents or other extended family. These activities can be centered around the theme of the holiday. You could have all of the people share what they are thankful for or make a thankful poster with drawings and writings. Prepare kids to share some of their school or other accomplishments so that the family can give them positive reinforcement. Prepare a grandparent by asking them to bring an important family story to tell. Start a tradition or revive one that has not been part of the family for a while. Have tasks for people to help. It feels good to be helpful so plan to have helpers.

Give your kids time

For adults, the concept of quality time can work quite well. For kids it doesn't work. You can plan quality events. But for kids, quality time doesn't exist, there is only time. Plan time with your kids while they are out of school and quality things will happen. Find out what they want to do and do that activity. Play a weekend long game of Monopoly. Watch that show that they can't go without. Have a contest with them on their favorite itouch app or play their favorite video game with them. Time might be the greatest gift you can give to yourself as a parent.

No lessons, please

If you have decided to take the first step and give your kids time, here is your next challenge. No life lessons and no fixing things. Kids like to hang out with other kids because their friends are not always telling them what to do or how what they just did will relate to the

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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