



RAISING CHILDREN WHO CARE

Nurturing Values of Justice and Peace in Young Children

By Susan Vogt

1. Start Young!

It's so much easier to set family standards and customs when your child is in the "Mom and Dad are God, are awesome, and know everything" stage than when they reach the "Mom and Dad know nothing, are nerds, and are here on earth solely to limit my fun" stage. (usually reached between 12 and 15).

2. Teach Peacemaking Skills.

Try this handy "4-C" formula for resolving conflicts:

- Concede (one person just gives in; not too likely with kids)
- Compromise (combatants take turns or negotiate a middle ground)
- Chance (toss a coin, pick numbers, or use *Paper/Rock/Scissors*)
- Create a new solution (neither child gets their original way, but agree to do something else instead)

3. Model nonviolent ways of solving problems.

Avoid spanking.

If necessary, take a parenting class to learn alternative ways to discipline.

4. Use Media sparingly.

Monitor it. Limit it. One violent or sexually explicit show is not going to scar a child for life, but frequent exposure desensitizes a child. Too much passive viewing leaves less time for more active or creative pursuits. The problem with excessive TV is not **so** much what it promotes, but the activity it prevents. Besides, commercials create artificial desires for more toys, etc.

5. Keep it simple.

Going without the latest toys, brands, and gadgets won't harm a child nearly as much as missing their parent's time. Save yourself the clutter. Buy a few good toys and books and stop.

6. Introduce diversity naturally.

Standing for racial and cultural diversity doesn't require taking your kids on a civil rights march but could be as simple as having pictures, music, and food in your home representing various racial and ethnic backgrounds. Patronize stores that are minority owned.

7. Be gentle with our earth.

Reduce, reuse, recycle! The hardest part of any recycling effort is setting up the containers and making it convenient.