

# Ten Terrific Ways To Connect With Children Of Any Age

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1. Ask your child to play a board game or card game *before* he or she asks you.
2. Teach your child ways to have fun without spending a lot of money.  
*How? Look in the local paper for seasonal events. Create a list of your own ideas and place to go, exchanging lists and feedback with friends.*
3. Use opportunities to involve your child in what you're doing as a way to catch up on what's going on in their lives. Much less intimidating than hitting the 'What's new at school?' question head on.  
*What sort of activities? Raking, shoveling snow, washing the car, gardening, folding laundry, preparing dinner, wrapping gifts, dusting, or even on those rare occasion when you're sitting on the front porch doing nothing.*
4. Expose your child to different people, places, and experiences so they are open to new situations. Side benefit – you may be learning something new together.  
*Think about something you've wanted to try like a pottery or art class. Many schools and museums offer low cost courses.*
5. Let grandparents spoil your child – that's what grandparents do.  
*Don't worry. You'll get your turn soon enough!*
6. Always – catch your child being good! Be very specific with praise such as "Thanks for cleaning up the playroom without being asked."  
*Idea – create coupons to give out for such deeds. Coupons can be for a special along time with a parent. For older kids, give out a coupon promising to listen to a problem, and NOT giving advice unless they ask! Masking tape is strongly recommended here.*
7. Ask for children's help in creating new and unique family traditions.  
*Examples, Friday night movie rental and picnic in the living room. Or bring a deeper meaning to existing holiday traditions, such as really identifying why you're thankful on Thanksgiving before the holiday meal.*
8. Let your children overhear you speaking positively about them.  
*When someone else praises your child, simply thank the person, and see your child with the same positive outlook.*
9. Choose your battles. If you're upset, think, will this really matter a year from now?  
*If you still choose to get mad, don't forget to forgive.*
10. Always kiss them goodnight.

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