Real Advice From Hot Mamas

Parenting Advice for Hot Mama

Jill Hurley Burns

March 2006

Don't compare your child with any other child; they are unique little individuals. Be satisfied with who they are and encourage who they want to be. Pushing your kids to be something they aren't will leave them always feeling insecure and without confidence.
Faye Lynn (Story) Guilmette, Mom of Tyler (13) and Tess (11)

One of the first forms of non-verbal communication… it won't be the last!

I intentionally incorporated counting to three in every day play (count to three before picking baby up out of tub or from highchair or crib, etc.) from a very young age so that when I had to start disciplining (i.e., "do _____ by the count of three or be punished" or "three strikes rule") the child knew exactly what I meant and it has worked except for part of the terrible two testing phase.
Carol Martin, Mom of Mary Hope (4) and twins Walker and Harrison (10 months)

$$$ Save, save, save. All these lessons are expensive. $$$

Just when you feel that you are at the end of your rope with a certain childhood behavior, remember that most things are just a phase, and this too shall pass…
Christine Turner, Mom of Emily (4)

We always underestimate what they know and understand.
Carol Martin, Mom of Mary Hope (4) and twins Walker and Harrison (10 months)

I want to grow up to be a beautiful, SMART princess, just like my Auntie Jill. Maybe someday, my Prince Michael will sweep me off my feet…. If not, I willl survive. I'll buy my own big house and rock, and live happily ever after as a spinster!!!

Before the child could walk or talk, I always made a point of saying and doing "lets put away this toy before we play with something else" so that when the child was old enough to help clean up they knew the expectation/rule. My daughter is very good about cleaning up after herself and thank goodness now that I have twins too.
Carol Martin, Mom of Mary Hope (4) and twins Walker and Harrison (10 months)

Kids are comforted by having regular routines. The best words of wisdom that my mom shared with me are 'Don't mess with the schedule!'
Christine Turner, Mom of Emily (4)

I'm just too cute for words!!

Keep cloth diapers stashed all over the house to clean up whatever might come out of the baby from either end.
Jill Lofstead, Mom of Ethan (6) and Alex (2)

If baby has trouble sleeping in crib/bassinet, try using the car seat or swing (sometimes it helps to keep the baby more upright and then you can put to baby in whatever room you want). Both of my boys slept in the swing all night long for several weeks - we went through a lot of D batteries!
Jill Lofstead, Mom of Ethan (6) and Alex (2)

Taking a bath is one of the most special times with the baby. Get the whole family in the big tub… The baby will love it!!

When giving the baby a bath, I like to close the bathroom door and turn the shower on full heat. Get the room nice and steamy and then give her a bath. It keeps her nice and warm. I also lay a hot washcloth on her chest to keep her warm.
Diane Story, Mom of Grace (4) and Joey (6 months)

Sleep is over-rated.
Christine Turner, Mom of Emily (4)

Tips for coping with a cholicky baby (and I hope you don't need them): feed in small amounts and burp often; do not overstimulate; try exposure to white noise, TV static, vacuum cleaner noise, place baby in car seat on top of running dryer,

vigorous bouncing; Mylecon drops (for gas); glass of wine (for yourself).
Christine Turner, Mom of Emily (4)

Ho, Ho, Ho!!

Don't feel like you're bothering the pediatrician if you have "silly" questions - I called whenever I had a question and the nurses were very understanding and helpful.
Jill Lofstead, Mom of Ethan (6) and Alex (2)

If you think you might be suffering from depression, make sure you tell your OBGyn right away! The sooner you get help, the sooner you will feel better (you can take anti-anxiety medication while you wait for the anti-depressant to kick in, and that really saved my life!) Also, there is a great local post-partum depression support group called the Ruth Rhoden Craven Foundation that has a wonderful website for you and your family to read www.ppdsupport.org.

Jill Lofstead, Mom of Ethan (6) and Alex (2)

If you are bottle feeding the baby, buy one of those dishwasher baskets to put the nipples in and run the dishwasher every night, even if it's not all the way full. Hand washing bottles every day gets old real fast in the beginning when the baby feeds every hour and half... in a few months the feedings will slow down dramatically and you won't have as many bottles to wash.
Jill Lofstead, Mom of Ethan (6) and Alex (2)

Say goodbye to a clean house (unless you're Denell).

Keep your freezer and pantry stocked with easy to prepare foods for when you don't have the time or

energy to cook. It will only be for a few months, so don't feel guilty if you eat Eggo waffles, cereal, or soup every meal for the first months.
Jill Lofstead, Mom of Ethan (6) and Alex (2)

"Sleep begets sleep" was my biggest shock with my first and second... everytime you think its best to keep them up so that they will sleep longer at night---THINK AGAIN, let them sleep!. I do recommend a very regimented sleep schedule during the day, however; Wake child every 3- 4 hours to feed (waking a sleeping baby is so hard to do---but it will pay off!) and, this is the KEY: then keep them up for at least 30 minutes after each feeding---use ice cubes if necessary! This is no secret trick of mine, it is from the Babywise method---you can take or leave portions of the Babywise philosophy, but I highly recommend you use this one! If used religiously, your child will sleep through the night by 12 weeks (I know too many babies this is true for, personally!)
Helen “Cokie” Berenyi, Mom of Helen Simmons (2) and Victoria (3 months)

Keep many bottles of Gripewater on hand---can purchase at most health food or grocery stores. (Use on pacifier when they wont take it, too!)
Helen “Cokie” Berenyi, Mom of Helen Simmons (2) and Victoria (3 months)

Learn as much as you can from your children… like running naked on the beach as often as possible.

Learn to SWADDLE!!! Don't leave the hospital until the nurses have taught you how to swaddle your baby tight. Even if she doesn't seem like she likes it, it is very comforting to the baby and will help calm her and put her to sleep.
Diane Story, Mom of Grace (4) and Joey (6 months)

Let the baby figure out a schedule but help him/her to stick to it. A
predictable routine will make your life much easier and the baby will
feel comfortable in knowing what comes next.
Bonnie Cotter, Mom of Aidan (2)

Remember to take as many pictures as possible of your children in embarrassing situations. You will always be able to use these as ransom when they are teenagers.

Don't worry if it seems your child will never get rid of her pacifier (or sucking her thumb, give up her blanket, etc.). As many people told me, "she won't go to college with it," so don't sweat it. There are plenty of other things to worry about.
Diane Story, Mom of Grace (4) and Joey (6 months)

Set up a nice area for late-night feedings so that you can relax and be comfortable. Make sure you include a comfy chair, a cozy blanket for
you, a side table (or two) that can hold Kleenex, a drink, bottle or
pumping equipment, a clock, and anything else

that will help you relax
and be comfortable. Those late night feedings can be very special and
(hopefully) they don't really last that long.
Bonnie Cotter, Mom of Aidan (2)

Write down all of baby's milestones on your regular wall calendar and save the calendars every year until you actually have time to enter them in your baby book.
Jill Lofstead, Mom of Ethan (6) and Alex (2)

Can you say "Good Gene Pool?"

In case you have two… The most effective advice I have really pertains to once your second is born. Our pediatrician gave us the best advice.... Upon returning home from the hospital both babies woke up from a nap at the exact same time, crying. Our pediatrician told us to tend to the oldest one first

as he understands. This was the best advice we received and I think helped with the youngest being a it more laid back and relaxed, and the oldest never felt slighted by the new baby.
Susan Okolida, Mom of Donovan (4) and Cameron (2)

Before there was “The Incredibles,” there was “The Nickersons.” Toddler superheroes at large…. Battling *poopy-heads all over the Sudbury playground.*

"Whatever works"!
Susan Okolida, Mom of Donovan (4) and Cameron (2)
Tips on Breastfeeding:

1) Know going into it that breastfeeding is time consuming and painful, but it is extremely rewarding and only gets easier!
2) Have baby latch on immediately after birth.
3) Do NOT let the nursery give your baby formula, period.
4) Your baby may cry, but I promise he is not starving; keep letting the baby latch on whenever he is fussy.
5) Your milk won't come in for a few days but you produce colostrums, which will nourish the baby.
6) Milk production is all supply and demand so if you go to formula you won't produce your own milk. Just be patient and continue to let the baby latch on frequently, this will help your milk come in.
7) Once your milk is in, space feedings out for every three hours. This teaches the baby to take full feedings and not snack all day. This may be hard the first couple of cycles he may cry. But I promise if you suck it up and get through those couple of hours, the next time he/she eats it will be a full meal and before you know it he will have very good eating habits.
8) Get lots of Lanisoh cream. The books will tell you that breastfeeding doesn't hurt if your baby is latched on right. I promise you, that is not the case. This cream is a necessity and I promise within 2 weeks you will be feeling fine.

Stacey Dodd, Mom of Ella Dru (2) and Livi (4 months)

Someday, we're going to be GREAT friends. I'll teach you to surf, and you can teach me baseball. Our Dads can teach us both to drink beer!! Our Moms will teach us everything else that we need to know.

We often think that allowing our (frightened) children to sleep with us is for their protection, when in essence, what we are reinforcing for them is that we are fearful and concerned about THEIR ability to manage coping through the night. We end up reinforcing their fears, rather than minimizing them. Kids learn that sleeping alone is okay only when they actually successfully experience it. That is when they realize their parents have some credibility and discover that they WILL be okay in their own bed. Tough for parents for awhile, but worth it in the long run.
Maureen (Gurney) Migliore, Mom of Alex (20), Emily (15), Elizabeth (14)

Never miss a moment to cuddle and say something positive to your kids. They never get

enough of this from the people who matter most. They'll continue to come back seeking it.
Maureen (Gurney) Migliore, Mom of Alex (20), Emily (15), Elizabeth (14)

Nursing moms aren't harmed from introducing a bottle simultaneously. It makes weaning soooo much easier, and really doesn't take away from the nursing/bonding experience.
Maureen (Gurney) Migliore, Mom of Alex (20), Emily (15), Elizabeth (14)

Princess Tatum

You know, you can't have too many princesses in one family.

Always stand behind what you say, and be careful what you threaten. Follow through is crucial in establishing and maintaining your credibility as a parent, and reinforcing your child's respect for you.
Maureen (Gurney) Migliore, Mom of Alex (20), Emily (15), Elizabeth (14)

Don't get mad when they make a mess; every handprint on the wall or stain on the carpet will mean that they were there. Try not to get upset when you can't go to the bathroom in peace because one day you'll go and you won't hear "MOM!!" and you will be disappointed.
Angela Ormson, Mom of J.R. (11), Harrison (8), and Spencer and Tucker (6)

My future's so bright, I have to wear shades!!!

Keep as many of their school papers as you can because one day it will be their treasure, just as it has been yours. Encourage them to be nice to their siblings because they share the closest bond on earth and when you are gone, only they will remember each others childhood birthday's and Christmas's.
Angela Ormson, Mom of J.R. (11), Harrison (8), and Spencer and Tucker (6)

Try and remind myself to cherish every good and every difficult moment with them, because before

you know it they are grown and gone. When your frame of reference is embracing them, everything else seems to fall into place. It sounds so simple and obvious, but really doing it and maintaining it is not so easy! Best Wishes!
Deanna Meilan, Mom of Bradley (8), Julia (7), and Chase (4)

I have repeatedly thought of things like “if you don't want your children to learn to aggress, then don't model this (including spanking) in front of them”. Redirection should always be the first line of intervention.
Maureen (Gurney) Migliore, Mom of Alex (20), Emily (15), Elizabeth (14)

We grow up so fast… Can you remember me when I was this small, Auntie Jill?

Don't EVER listen to the older generation, whose adage that 'if your children bite, then bite them to

back to teach them how this feels'... I've always cringed at this one. Lots of behavior can be reinforced with redirection and social praise, but biting warrants an immediate removal, NOT reciprocal biting.
Maureen (Gurney) Migliore, Mom of Alex (20), Emily (15), Elizabeth (14)

Some of my favorite products:

- Flanders Buttocks ointment only for diaper rashes.
- Baby Blanket sunscreen is best (its a pasty lotion and lasts forever out in the sun and can be applied seconds before entering the water).
- Get the One Step Ahead catalog. www.onestepahead.com It's great for odd things you can't find at Babies R Us.
- I love NUK pacifiers! Yes they make them in premie/newborn. For the baby under 18 pounds this is perfect size. They are hard to find, but look for them they are worth the effort.
- Aveno products (bath, lotion, shampoo) are great and healthy.

Rhonda Weichsel, Mom of Brendle (16) and Christian (3)

Take a tube sock, cut the toe out, fold it in half, and place over baby's knees as they start crawling (especially on hard wood). Nice protection!
Rhonda Weichsel, Mom of Brendle (16) and Christian (3)

What will I be when I grow up??? A musician, explorer, wild game hunter, doctor, lawyer, Indian Chief??? So many possibilities.

Baby crying? Oh, you mean the baby doesn't stop crying? Go outside for fresh air and sunshine. Babies love the feel on a little sun on their faces.
Rhonda Weichsel, Mom of Brendle (16) and Christian (3)

No matter how bad he does it, never correct your husband when he helps with the baby. With criticism, he is likely to not help out next time. So if the diaper is on backwards, outfits doesn't match or infant tub is left full of soapy water, be glad he helped, because your dad probably didn't.
Dawn Ludwig, Mom of Charlotte (1 ½) and Charles (6 months)

*If the baby is a boy, you have to worry about **one** penis. If it's a girl, you have to worry about **hundreds** of penis's!!*

Remember that every baby is different, and you, above all, know the most about your baby. Trust your instincts, and be assertive with doctors.
Jolene Lebel, Mom of Gregory (13) and Amanda (9)

Savor the moments. They grow up so fast.
Christine Turner, Mom of Emily (4)

More important than never waking a sleeping baby, never let anyone else either!!! Sleep deprivation is one of the most challenging things you'll have to deal with as a parent, particularly once you go back to work.

Always remember though, this too shall pass. Every thing you go thru is a stage. Enjoy each one, because the next may be worse. Also keep in mind, at least right now, you know WHERE they are sleeping!

Never wake a sleeping baby!
Jolene Lebel, Mom of Gregory (13) and Amanda (9)

You can't spoil a baby younger than 9 months.
Jolene Lebel, Mom of Gregory (13) and Amanda (9)

Consistency in schedule and rules is important – for both you and the baby. Determine what works best, and then stick with it. Most importantly, God has given you temporary custody for the child. Love, teach, and honor them.
Jolene Lebel, Mom of Gregory (13) and Amanda (9)

Never wake a sleeping baby;
Go to the grocery store by yourself if at all possible, even if it has to be at night;
Sleep when baby sleeps;
Avoid diaper genies, they don't hold much once they become toddlers;
Use your gut instinct!
Avoid perfume, heavy scented lotions and dangly earrings; and
In laws and family must be told how you want things done!!!
Stuart Foss, Mom of Jasper (2)

Siblings are the best!!!