

## Raising Moral Kids

Wanting to be like people they admire is a typical trait of children. They want to please their parents. They want to be loved, understood, and guided by them. God has imbedded these needs in children to help them learn about life from their parents.

- **Kids imitate parents out of admiration.** Be a good role model. Your honesty builds a relationship your children can trust. It also says you trust them. Your generosity will teach them to care about others. Your gentleness will teach them kindness. Your respect for persons in your conversations at home rubs off as your kids imitate that respect. Your positive attitude about life says that your values have made you happy. Praying with your children tell them God is real and that you really trust him.
- **Kids want to please their parents.** They will respond much better to encouragement than to punishment. When you praise a child for remembering to do the recycling or one of the chores, you help his or her sense of responsibility to blossom. When you praise your child's talent on the piano, you can stand back and watch his or her desire to excel. Encouragement builds a relationship of love and respect.
- **Your kids want to be loved by you.** Without love, children have no reason to be good. A tender, wise love creates happy, cooperative kids. Daily hugs and kisses should be standard. Love should be evident to your child even when you discipline.
- **Kids want you to guide them.** Give them limits. Often, children will see how far they can push their parents before they care enough to set limits. Also, talk about sex at this age—before emotions get in the way of your sharing. Waiting until adolescence is too late. Your child will be too embarrassed to discuss it when peer values and misinformation beat you to the punch.
- **Kids need your time.** Many people regret that they did not set aside more of their personal interests to spend time with their children. It takes willingness on your part to let go of some things in order to find that time for your children. Think of it as a sale: it doesn't last long!