

## Parenting Tips

We are often asked if being an adoptive parent is different from being a biological parent. Our answer is a simple one: love is universal. Skills can be learned. That said, we'd like to offer you 5 tips to help you on your journey – not matter your parenting situation: foster, biological or adoption.

### **1. Take care of yourself.**

Parenting can be compared to using an oxygen mask on an airplane: “put your own mask on before you help anyone else.” The point is...If you don't take care of yourself, you won't be of any help to those who are relying upon you. Make sure that, if chaos visits your home, you take time to care for your own needs too.

### **2. Enjoy your children in each moment.**

Parenting takes a great deal of time and energy. But as any veteran parent will tell you, the days that your children are actually in your house are numbered. Make sure you take time to enjoy your children, and learn to appreciate even the smallest victories together. Remember, the older you children become, the faster time seems to go.

### **3. Have a plan.**

We all have thoughts about what we hope our children will learn and who they will become as adults. While you can't live their lives for them, you can guide children on their journey by inviting conversation about the important values that define life. Don't be afraid to explain your reasoning by sharing some of your own stories with them.

### **4. Be the person you hope they will become.**

The old saying: “I can't hear what you are saying because your actions are speaking so loudly” is especially true with children and parents. You can give kids all the lectures and talks you want about how you expect them to act, All the lectures in the world will pale in comparison to the lessons they learn by watching you .

### **5. Keep faith a priority.**

There is no greater gift you can give to your children than a strong faith life. Your children will hear what you say about God and religion, but what will really impact them is seeing how you live out those beliefs. For families of mixed faith—it is equally important that each parent be authentic in living out their faith. Find common ground through shared family prayers and service work. It's a win-win situation for all.