

Peaceful Activities for ALL age groups (Mom & Dad included)

- Spend time in nature. In our fast-paced world, we often forget the importance of connecting with nature. Walk by the river, go sledding, hike with your kids, have picnics in the local park, encourage outdoor play. And remember, in the words of Richard Louv, "There is no bad weather, there's just bad clothing."
- Focus on cooperative games. The basic components of cooperative games are:
 - 1) Cooperation is essential to success;
 - 2) All participants are involved, rather than eliminated
 - 3) There are no losers;
 - 4) The game is fun- Limit screen time! The American Pediatric Assoc. recommends zero screen time for children under 2. Establish healthy use of media and learn to use it to connect in the real world. Watch TV and movies together, with lots of conversation about what you're watching.
- Consider having a weekly family meeting about any concerns/problems. You can use a talking stick and pass it around, so that the person with the stick has the floor and others may not interrupt. This is a great way to air grievances, dialogue about issues of concern, as well as to learn to listen to other family members.
- Starting at age 2, your child can help with household chores. This builds a sense of responsibility and pride in being able to help out around the home.
- Be open to attending parenting course for the different stages your child/children go through.

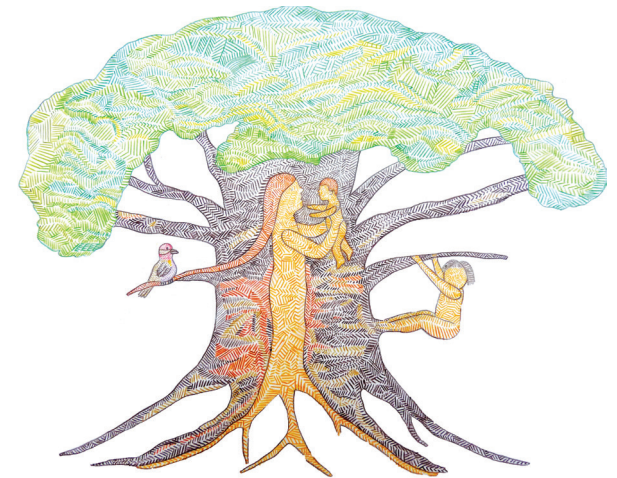


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Peaceful Parenting in the 21st Century



“If we are to teach real peace in this world, and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with the children.”

~ Mahatma Gandhi

HELPFUL HINTS FOR RAISING PEACEFUL CHILDREN

Pre-Schoolers

- Read books with your child that teach cooperation and sharing.
- Reward your child for thinking up creative, non-violent solutions to problems they encounter.
- Give your child nonviolent toys: arts & crafts supplies, books, building blocks, balls, magic tricks, puzzles, riding toys, a sandbox, costumes, tunnels.
- Encourage your young child to express his/her feelings through drawing with markers, paint, pastels. This is much easier at this stage than verbalizing their fears and feelings.
- Talk to your child about problem-solving. Explain how you feel about hitting, kicking, or biting to solve conflicts, and suggest alternatives, or ask them if they can think of other ways to deal with the problem that doesn't involve hurting the other person.
- Make toys from cardboard boxes or other materials that you may have around the house. You can make a fantastic play house, a kitchen, and other imaginative creations that your child will enjoy just as much as an expensive play house from the toy store. Have your child help you – they can draw pictures on it, paint it, decorate it.
- Help to build your child's self-esteem. Praise cooperation, empathy, and imagination.

6 – 12 years

- Discourage violent video and computer games, and explain how you feel about them to your child.
- Discuss your own and your child's feelings honestly. They need to feel that they are part of decision-making within the family, and that their opinions and feelings are valued.
- Discuss current events relating to peace. Celebrate examples of hope and peace with your child.
- Have your child attend a local Peace Camp during summer holidays.
- Encourage your child to have a Pen Pal – this is a real learning experience with many benefits, including learning about a new culture, language, different ways of living, and so on.
- Research and discuss bullying. What are some ways to deal with bullying? What has your child's experience of bullying been?
- Teach your children environmental awareness. Encourage recycling, mindful use of water and other resources. Discuss climate change, share your own ideas and listen to your child's.
- In gentle ways, your child needs to know that you are in charge!

Teenagers

- Watch or read the news with your teen. Engage your teenager in discussions about important world issues. You might be surprised at their insights and feelings!
- Encourage your teen to join a club, be active in the community, volunteer for a worthy cause. Teens need to feel a sense of purpose in their lives, and can contribute greatly to their community.
- Your teen could initiate or join a Peace Group – either school-based or community-based. Give them your full support. This will help them learn that there are numerous channels of action that help to make positive social change.
- Encourage your teen to write letters to their City Counsellor, MLA or MP regarding issues they care about deeply. Be an approachable parent. This means listening to your teens' feelings without judging or providing quick solutions. This helps to keep the channels of communication open.
- Be politically involved. This serves as a role model for your children, teaching them how to communicate with politicians and civil servants.
- Get involved in building a Peace Float for the Stampede Parade, or some other community activity focused on peace.