



# Family Focus on Respect

We all want a chance to be ourselves, make decisions, be accepted, be treated in a polite, decent way, and have a little privacy. We would like people to treat us with respect. If we are people of character we will show respect toward others, including our children and our parents.

Respect is showing others that they are valued for their character and who they are, not what they look like or what they have. Being a respectful family member means that we treat others with consideration. Respectful people tolerate other people's beliefs and accept individual differences without prejudice or discrimination. It also means that we treat others the way we want them to treat us. We don't intimidate or force people to do things. (This is not intended to conflict with parents enforcing rules in their household.)

## Respect Do's

- Be courteous and polite.
- Accept others without prejudice.

## Respect Don'ts

- Don't insult, abuse, hurt, put down, mistreat or harass others.
- Don't make unwanted comments about a person.
- Don't take advantage of people.
- Don't use people to get what you want.

## What can families do to develop and reinforce respect<sup>1</sup>?

- Use the dinner table as a forum for discussing ethical issues, use "Dear Abby" columns as non-threatening discussion starters (make sure you show respect toward everyone's comments so that they feel safe to continue to discuss ethical issues).
- Show respect to your children by listening. Make a point to set aside 5-7 minutes at breakfast and/or after school to give your full attention to listening to your child.
- Take your children to visit older folks, grandparents, neighbors, or relatives as often as possible. Help them ask questions about their heritage and history.
- Make up four rules for showing respect when visiting another person's home. Then discuss examples of what it means to follow or break each rule.
- Rather than criticizing people or using negative labels, try to find the best in others. Let your children hear you praising others.
- Visit a cemetery on a sunny day to pay tribute to those dear to you who have died.

## Respect Challenge:

Your child has been challenged to think of one person he/she has been disrespectful to in the past. Then, work to show respect to that person. At his/her next meeting he/she is to report (without telling names) how his/her behavior changed toward that person.

## Respect Quote:

"Never look down on anybody unless you're helping him up."—Jesse Jackson

<sup>1</sup>Adapted from Golden Rules: The Ten Ethical Values Parents Need to Teach Their Children, W. Dosick, Harper, San Francisco, p. 20, 22, 1995.