

3 Ways We're Hurting Our Kids

If there was a shortcut to parenting, I thought I would have found it by now. I haven't ... not even close. But that doesn't mean I haven't tried. And it doesn't mean I haven't failed. Still we all keep looking and hoping, don't we?

Baby music classes do not give our kids a fast track to music scholarships in college. T-ball at age four doesn't mean the pros at twenty. Reading a Bible story at bedtime every night won't lead us to growing a godly teen. **There are no quick fixes, perfect extracurricular actives, or even right methods of spiritual guidance that will result in perfect kids.** We cannot skip the rough stuff in life and move directly to GO to collect our rewards of growing godly adults. Don't we wish it was all that simple?

There are a few things we can cut out that will benefit our kids: the latest gadgets, pricey fashion, electronic games, and social interaction that cuts out face-to-face social life. But we parents often pile on those things when we can't be there with time, attention, and connection. I've been guilty of it. "Here, play with my tablet for a while so I can finish this quick task."

There are things we might think will help, but they are actually hurting our kids:

- The right preschool will not make up for time with parents, learning about life, relationships and caring for God.
- The right moral stories will not make up for serving as a family, discovering there are real people behind the "issues" who need a helping hand, who need hope.
- Even great biographies of heroes of the Christian faith cannot fill in for models of godliness. Instead, children need to see parents on their knees, crying out

to God and discussing how God's truth overcomes the world's lies.

Yes, it's important to share stories of Christian faith (I've even written a book for that!), but **Mom and Dad—your story is the most important one your child will read ...** and they read it in real, living, breathing flesh.

To teach your children patience, compassion, self-control, and wisdom, you have to have those things.

To teach your kids to be content with who God made them to be, you need to be content.

To teach your kids to trust God and follow His dreams for you, you must do it.

To teach your children how to pray, you must know how to pray ... and do it.

I wrote a book to inspire children called ***Prayers that Changed History***. I highlighted 25 historical people and shared how prayer transformed their lives and impacted the world. I would LOVE for you to buy this book for your children. But first, I'd love you to read it for yourself. Some of these historical figures will be familiar to you. Others will be new, but my hope is that you will take time to read these stories and let them impact your heart first. Then I hope you will consider how to ask God to revive your own prayer life.

There is no shortcut or fast track to raising godly kids. Instead, you must be a model of day-in and day-out love and service to God. The way you live is the most important way to determine the type of life your child will live, too. Put yourself on the right path and guide your children to follow. And the best way to do that is spending your time in God's Word and on your knees, living the life God called you to. You never know how that will change your family's history ... no shortcuts needed.

Tricia Goyer has written more than 35 books, including novels that delight and entertain readers and nonfiction titles that offer encouragement and hope. She has also published more than 500 articles in national publications such as Guideposts, Thriving Family, Proverbs 31, and HomeLife Magazine.