

The No. 1 Thing Your Child Needs From You

Would you like to know what to do this school year to help your children in more ways than you can imagine? Yes? Great. Keep reading.

We have all been created by God with five core needs that must be met. This is true for children and adults. I've been blogging about one or another aspect of these needs for years. My book, *Finding Authentic Hope and Wholeness*, explains them in detail.

It's been a long time since I shared some basics, so here goes. I'll cover the first core need today and the rest in the weeks to follow.

Security: Who Can I Trust?

Your children must have trustworthy people they can depend upon. Security is their first need, and you don't want them to put it in their popularity, grades or beauty. Those things will come and go and fade away.

Do the best you can this year to be worthy of your children's trust. Be responsible, honest, helpful and available. Apologize when you make mistakes. You want them to come to you when they need advice, and they won't if you're inconsistent, not helpful, critical, prideful and the like.

Also, point out other people they know who they can depend upon. Model how you rely on others. How do you discern who is on your side? What qualities do you prioritize and how do you recognize them in someone? How do you decide whether to give someone a second chance if you find out he or she has gossiped about you?

If, like me, you're a Christ follower, make sure they know how your security is rooted in God and His character. Let them see you search for relevant truths in the Scripture. Pray and wait for God's answer and make sure your kids know you do this. When they come to you with concerns, pray for them right then and there.

Children, like us, can appropriately place some of their security in themselves. Are they maturing? Tell them. Have you noticed they're honoring their word? If they say they're starting their homework and you notice they do, affirm them. If they say they'll help you by watching their younger brother and they do, affirm them. Rather than saying, "Good," tell them, "You're becoming more and more trustworthy. I'm glad I can trust you."

When children trust in God, it's life-changing. When they trust in people who know more than they do and have proven to be worthy of their trust, it can be life-saving. When they learn to trust in themselves, in addition to these, not instead of these, it increases their confidence. When they find themselves alone, they won't be as hesitant and unsure of themselves as peers without security. This is healthy.

Rock-solid security makes it more likely children will have a complete and positive identity, belonging based on healthy attributes, purpose they can realistically fulfill, and the competence to do it all.

Prioritize security—your children will appreciate it and you.

You may want to subscribe to the blog to make sure you don't miss the next blogs where I'll detail the other four needs. As always, thanks for your interest.



Dr. Kathy Koch is the author of *Screens & Teens: Connecting With Our Kids in a Wireless World (Moody)*.