

Words of Wisdom for Single Parents

 by: Sarah Mitchell The cost of being a parent and raising a child in today's world is constantly increasing. The risk of your child becoming involved in problem behaviour is also greater. Parents must work together as a team to ensure the brightest future for their children. But what if there is no team. No other person to rely upon. This is what millions of single parents deal with everyday. But it is not only the parent who sees this as a gloomy situation. Children are quite often left thinking that they are the reason for a separation or divorce. It is the child who must attend father and son day at school without a dad. They have to grow up with all the stigma attached to coming from a "broken home". These are just a few of the many potential problems that a single parent's household are faced with. This article is aimed at providing single parents with some strategies for raising a good child despite what other people may say. Concentrate on the positives. Although it may be impossible to see at first, there are some positives for single parents. The main one being less fighting, bickering and tension around the house. This will benefit your child in the long run as it becomes a more child friendly environment. Try to see your situation as a new found freedom and feeling of independence. Develop a new relationship with your child. A child must obviously be comforted at such a time, but also made to see that you are the boss. Do not let your child think that because there is now only one parent around, they can do whatever they please. Children need rules and routine, regardless of how many parents are around. Ask for help if you need it. Suddenly single parents will probably find that their workload doubles or triples at first. If your children are old enough, be sure to set them some chores around the house each day to take the pressure off yourself a little. Speak to other parents as much as you can. You will be surprised how often they will be happy to help out. It may just be taking your child to the movies or to a sports game on a Saturday morning, but every little bit helps. Above all, don't feel as though you have to do absolutely everything on your own. Do not use your children for emotional support. Children need to have fun, play with their friends and enjoy their youth. Do not become overly possessive of your child or look to them for emotional support. This quite often leads to the child feeling as overwhelmed as you are. Although you may not be ready for another romantic relationship, try to talk to other adults about your emotions. Kids react best to routine. In order to create a stable household environment with children, there must be rules and routine. Simple things like having dinner at the same time each night, bed time, homework time etc... If you can provide a schedule for them, they will feel a sense of security. Of course, the correct dosage of attention and affection will also provide and sustain a nurturing environment, but a combination of the two will always work best. Don't forget about you. For single parents with a house full of kids and only one parent to do all the work and all the worrying, it may be easy to forget about oneself. It is crucial to the well-being of your children, that you stay healthy. If you feel run down, ask another parent or relative to mind the kids for a night or two. Try to remember the things you enjoy doing and dedicate a little bit of your time to do these things. The way a parent feels is quite often reflected in a child. If you are stressed out all the time, then this may directly or indirectly affect your child. So, try to stay calm around the kids when you can. Take a deep breath, or wait until the kids are out of the car before you start screaming! Try to remember that it is all about quality not quantity. There are many two parent households out there that are doing a much worse job than yourself. Just because a parent finds themselves on their own, doesn't mean that things won't work out. Remember, not just anyone can run a house, raise kids and do a thousand other things all at once. Give yourself a pat on the back once in a while. You have a lot to be proud of. Best of luck to you!

About the Author

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