

Being a Fun Parent...

...Even on the not so fun days.



Summertime is here, a time that usually is filled with celebration, laughter, and carefree moments. But this summer things look different. As parents, we're tired, we're stressed, and we're irritable. Those in our home might be getting the brunt of it. How do we bring sunshine back in the midst of a storm?

Being a good parent doesn't mean always being the fun parent. But adding some laughter is a good thing!

Own Up To It. Sometimes we're not that fun, in fact, sometimes we're downright unpleasant to be around. But being a good parent doesn't mean being a perfect parent. When our cracks start to show, often our instinct is to justify rather than apologize. There is enormous power in a child observing parents who are humble enough to say, "I am sorry. Will you forgive me?". Be the model you want to be by owning up to your mistakes, asking for forgiveness, and learning how to give grace.



Disconnect, to Connect: The average American checks their phone 96 times a day, that's once every ten minutes. When we do...our eyes come off our children, our ears tune them out, and our mind goes somewhere else. We're all guilty. Developing a habit of intentionally setting your phone aside for at least 30 concentrated minutes a day tells your child, you are more important. Being a fun parent means being a connected parent. Use that time to give them your uninterrupted attention. Play on their level, listen to their stories, share something silly, and laugh.



Wake Up Earlier. You may think waking up earlier completely contradicts becoming a more fun parent. But I promise there is a secret in having a few sweet moments to yourself before the sounds of waking children. Imagine starting your day feeling prepared and grounded rather than dragged into it. We recommend first spending a little time doing what restores your soul: journaling, exercising, praying, or reading, and then a little time getting ready for the day: showering, getting dressed, and maybe even putting together a rough plan for the day. It's worth it.



Find a Reason to Laugh: One of the best ways to bring fun into parenting is simply to laugh with your kids. Kids are inherently goofy and silly. When you speak this language with them, you bond. And the best part is, you don't even have to be that funny...make a funny face, respond in a strange tone of voice, make a random animal sound, do a goofy walk, and watch how your kiddos respond. (Check out our *Laughing with your Kids* resource for more ideas). Laughter is the best medicine, and the truth is we could all use a little more of it these days.

