



Possibility Parenting

Taking the Time

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SW: This is SW with Parenting and Child Development Extension Specialist at NC State University, Karen DeBord. Today's Possibility Parenting addresses that stressful time when you walk in the door with your children at the end of the day. Dr. DeBord, parents walk in the door at home and feel they need to hit the ground running. What are some tips for handling this part of the day?

KD: Two of the most stressful times with children are the *end of the day when you get home* and when you are *getting ready in the morning*. These are times when things can spin out of control. Often parents turn to TV or a video to entertain their child to buy them some peace and quiet. Although this is ok to some extent, when it is over used, we find that children at school-age become nearly addicted to television and monitoring TV becomes such a hassle that parents give up. So don't fall into that trap.

My rule is invest 5 minutes to save 10 minutes. Try to spend at least 5 minutes with your children right after you get home. Your child has actually missed you and needs to reconnect. So once you walk in the door, they whine and tug on you.

Instead of hitting the ground running, try some of these ideas

Can they sit with you to help you while you open the mail. Or have them help you decide what they want to play with or read. Then sit and play for a few minutes. You will find it is also relaxing for you. Then once the child has reconnected with you, they can feel more self-assured and can be on their own while you change clothes, or even start dinner. But they still want to be with you so, consider if they can help in the kitchen, can they help stir? Is there a cabinet that they are allowed to pull things from to pretend cook? It's all about the connections, not TV, not stressing out...finding a little time to enjoy your child each day. It will pay off in the future.

I'm Karen DeBord with Possibility Parenting.