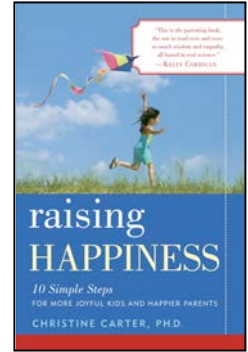




RAISING HAPPINESS

10 Simple Steps for More Joyful Kids and Happier Parents

by Christine Carter, Ph.D.



Praise for RAISING HAPPINESS

“A winner ... Carter grounds her path to happiness in solid science.”
—*U.S. News & World Report*

“This is THE parenting book. This is the one to read over and over. So much wisdom and empathy, all based in real science. My children owe Christine Carter big time.”
—Kelly Corrigan, author of *The Middle Place*

“The learning curve for all parents is in failure analysis—where and how we went off course—and how we can do better the next go round. Enter *Raising Happiness*, a compendium of ideas and suggestions on how to do better and how to increase happiness and joy in all families. Read it, enjoy, and most importantly, put it into practice.”
—Mike Riera, Ph.D., author *Field Guide to the American Teenager* and *Right From Wrong*

“*Raising Happiness* is an elegant, funny, and rigorous handbook for the humbling task of raising joyful children. Brimming with brilliantly distilled science, poignant stories from her family, and what parents so urgently seek – clear, practical, and informed guidance – it is an encyclopedia of wisdom for raising children in today’s multitasking, multimedia world.”
—Dacher Keltner, author *Born To Be Good: The Science of A Meaningful Life*, Professor of Psychology, University of California, Berkeley

As parents, we all want our children to grow into happy adults; but sometimes we feel as though their personalities are already set in genetic stone. New scientific research reveals that happiness is a learned skill and that parenting styles and practices have a tremendous effect on children’s emotional outlook on life. In “**RAISING HAPPINESS: 10 Simple Steps for More Joyful Kids and Happier Parents**” (A Ballantine Books Trade Paperback; March 1, 2011), Dr. Christine Carter—a sociologist at the Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley and mother of two young children—reveals ten simple principles distilled from years of fascinating research that can help parents lay the groundwork for positive emotions now, into adolescence and beyond.

Psychologists, sociologists, psychiatrists, and neurologists study happiness through single focus lenses, but when you put together their disparate research—as Carter does at the Greater Good Science Center—you see proof that happiness is a skill; it is a muscle any parent can help their child build and maintain. In the book, Carter covers the day-to-day pressure points of parenting—how best to discipline, get kids to school and activities on time, and get dinner on the table—as well as the more elusive issues of helping children build healthy friendships and develop emotional intelligence. In these ten key steps, Carter also reveals:

- The best way avoid raising a brat—changing bad habits into good ones;
- What parents should consider when tackling the child care dilemma, and what new research reveals about the effects of daycare;
- Tips on how to change your kids’ attitude into gratitude;
- The trap of trying to be perfect—and how to stay clear of its pitfalls;

(over)

- The right way to praise kids—and why too much of the wrong kind can be just as bad as not enough;
- The spirit of kindness—how to raise kind, compassionate, and loving children;
- Strategies for inspiring kids to do boring (but necessary) tasks—and become more self-motivated in the process.

With sidebars and ideas for building these proficiencies in daily life, Carter empowers parents to set their kids up to thrive, and in the process, become happier parents themselves.

Christine Carter's 10 Steps for Raising Happy Kids

1. **Take care of yourself:** A happy parent is a great role model. Here are ideas for how to argue with your spouse in ways that won't scar your kids, tips on how to strengthen your marriage, and thoughts on "sex and the seriously tired parent."
2. **Strengthen social bonds:** To build strong and successful relationships, kids need to develop emotional intelligence and social competence—both of which are rooted in the parent-child bond. Carter includes tips on how to best intervene with your children when they are fighting (how to teach constructive conflict resolution), her seven steps to raising kind children, and discusses the importance of father involvement.
3. **Praise effectively:** Foster a growth-based mindset (i.e. "with hard work you can learn new skills") instead of a fixed-mindset ("you are a chip off the old block!") and use the right language when you praise a child's efforts.
4. **Cultivate gratitude, forgiveness and optimism:** Here are ideas for ways to help kids articulate their likes and dislikes and to nurture in them a sense of sincere altruism and empathy.
5. **Become an "Emotion Coach":** Happy people are sad sometimes, and part of our job as parents is to help our children understand and control their negative emotions. Here are ways to balance the positive and negative emotions running amok in your household, and the research-tested way to help your kids become emotionally literate.
6. **Form happiness habits:** Includes tips and techniques for avoiding battles of will and setting up positive daily routines
7. **Teach self-discipline:** There are two kinds of discipline: the kind you exercise over your kids—enforcing rules and setting limits—and the internal self-discipline that they develop with your help (and through delayed gratification). Carter reveals tips on how parents can help kids practice techniques and skills that build self-regulation, explains how to become an authoritative parent and discusses why spanking is never "ok."
8. **Teach inner peace:** Ways to help kids find inner calm and "flow" —that feeling you get when you are doing something you love so much that time seems to stand still. Carter also reveals ways to teach creativity (since studies show creativity is more of a skill than an inborn talent) and meditations you can do with your child.
9. **Balance structured activities with play time:** Multiple studies show that kids need free-play time to develop emotionally and intellectually. Here are guidelines for the right balance. Carter also includes the latest findings on the effects of day care, explains why children under two should not be watching TV, and offers tips on choosing the right preschool.
10. **Eat Dinner Together as a Family:** Tips and science-based strategies for making sure your kids learn healthy eating habits when they are young.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

CHRISTINE CARTER, Ph.D. is a sociologist at UC Berkeley's Greater Good Science and writes a blog for Greater Good, which is syndicated on the Huffington Post and PsychologyToday.com. Dr. Carter has been quoted in *Women's Health* and *Parenting* magazines, *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *USA Today* and dozens of other publications. She has appeared on the "Oprah Winfrey Show," the "Rachael Ray Morning Show," "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart," "CBS Sunday Morning," "ABC World News with Diane Sawyer" and NPR.

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