

February 7-8, 2009



## Parenting Tips

### It's Hard to Raise a Leader

Some children are born leaders. They want to control their parents, their siblings, their friends, and even people they don't know. They have their own agenda and want everyone else to know what it is and how to fit into it. Leaders can be a real blessing in life but they sure are hard to raise.

One of the greatest gifts you can give to your budding leader is the ability to follow. To follow means listening to the needs and desires of others, submitting to someone else's agenda, and learning how to work cooperatively on a team. All good leaders need to know how and when to follow.

Although you will nurture the leadership gifts your child possesses, it's also your job to teach him or her how to work with others. The weaknesses of young leaders are demonstrated in negative ways like arguing, badgering, and being demanding or angry.

Don't just brush off these weaknesses as inevitable. Take time to correct, but do it in a way that appreciates the child's gifts. "Karen, I can tell you're going to be a good leader someday, but remember that leaders think about the needs of others." Or, "Jim, I like the way you take initiative with your brother. Remember, though, that a good leader is also a good listener."

If you guide the development of your young leader you'll not only make family life easier now, but you'll also benefit many other followers down the road. Your hard work will be worth it in the end.

*This parenting tip is from the book [Home Improvement, The Parenting Book You Can Read to Your Kids](#) by Dr. Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, RN, BSN.*