

FAMILY CONNECTION

 **Foothills**
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bringing faith to life
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Cooperation Makes It Happen

By The Parent Cue | Nov. 19, 2012 | Blog



As a mom of four, I can attest that chaos reigns when no one is getting along and everyone is trying to do their own thing. On the flip side, it knocks my socks off to see what can be achieved when everyone focuses their energy and cooperates. Here are a few practical tips for parents to help their kids start combining forces to do great things together.

1. Practice working together before you are in a “real” situation where cooperation is required. That way when it actually comes time for all hands on deck, they’ll be trained professionals. Make it fun by playing board games, where everyone is taking turns, pass around a new or special object, or tag-team read a book. For older kids, specific challenges that reward

teamwork (such as working together to follow a recipe and make dinner or cookies) helps teach that everyone has to do their part or it won’t turn out.

2. Explain the rules.

Better yet, have your kids be a part of creating the rules. They can only do their part if they know what they are expected to do. They’ll have more buy in if they’ve been a part of the process.

3. Give options, not orders.

This is part of the Love & Logic parenting strategy where you become more of a consultant and less of a boss or remote-control parent. “Would you like to listen to music while we get the garage cleaned and sorted or race against the timer to see if we can beat it?” instead of “You’ve got 30 minutes to

clean this garage!”

4. Ask questions, and

LISTEN. Your child might have an incredibly out-of-the box way of doing something that achieves the end you had in mind, but by a much more fun, exciting, creative route. This also shows you’re willing to cooperate and models compromise for the sake of teamwork.

5. Problem solve together.

Instead of simply giving them your solution to the laundry problem, let them come up with their own. Put on your coach’s hat and polyester shorts if you must in order to play the role of facilitator rather than being the referee. Role-play and role-reversal are great tools to get the creative juices flowing and garner participation.

6. Praise positive behavior.

When you see cooperation, make a BIG DEAL of it so that they’ll keep on doing it. And when the bickering escalates, remind everyone of the time they got along and worked together to accomplish something amazing to help re-direct them back

to being simpatico siblings. Encourage and cheerlead being careful not to exclude or isolate anyone, the goal is to make everyone feel needed and wanted.

7. Inspire them to greatness by helping them look outside of themselves and see the bigger picture. Who doesn’t want to win or play a small role in something bigger than themselves? It’s amazing when I say, “Why don’t you each make Dad a Happy Birthday card” and watch my kids pool their resources and instead turn it into a garage door-wide banner to get the most bang for their buck. Another great idea is to collectively give to a cause. When every one give a little, it adds up to a lot!

8. Tell Stories. Share memories of when you were a kid and had to do your part in order for something good to happen. Or vice versa, what you learned when you didn’t pull your weight.

It’s amazing how adding people and subtracting their divisions ends up multiplying the results.

Ways to Connect

Family Service Project

This month's project is coloring placemats and baking cookies for the Kairos Ministry Retreat.

- Pick up a set of placemats to color at home and bring back any Sunday during February.
- Bake a dozen cookies as a family and know that your gift of kindness will bring a tangible symbol of God's love to the inmates at Donovan Correctional Facility. Cookies are due on Sunday February 28.

Join us at the February 7th FX where Al Paton will share his Kairos Ministry experience. Learn how something as simple as a colored placemat and a plate of cookies can change a person's heart.

Spotlight



FUMC families assembled these fleece blankets to welcome the Interfaith Shelter guests staying this month in the Youth Center.

What's Happening in KidsConnect?



Parent Cue

This month's Parent Cue is about Cooperation. Pick up your card at KidsConnect.

As kids are growing, they become more aware of the people around them. They have friends on the playground or in their neighborhood. They have to work in teams to finish projects in school. If they don't learn God's plan for cooperation, they'll have a difficult time getting along with people. ***In February, our KidsConnect focus is discovering what the Bible says about cooperation—working together to do more than you could do alone.*** Cooperation is actually a spiritual concept that originates with God. He created us so we could have a relationship with Him, and so that we could participate in His work together. God put all of us together on this planet to do more together than we could ever do alone, and in some cases—with His help—to do things that might even seem "un-doable." Our Bible memory verse this month is **"Two people are better than one. They can help each other in everything they do," (Ecclesiastes 4:9 NIV).** The Bible is full of stories of people who came together in faith to do something they never could have done alone. We can't wait to see what happens when kids and families more fully understand God's design for cooperation!

Shout Out to...



Christine Ranney, for serving with the 2nd/3rd grade KidsConnect team. When she is not in KidsConnect, she loves being outdoors and spending time with her family.

Get Connected!

Here is what is coming up in Children's, Youth & Family Ministries.

- *Family Experience (FX), 2/7 at 11:45am*
- *Canned Soup "Souper Bowl Drive", 2/7*
- *Ash Wednesday: Imposition of Ashes, 2/10 at 7:00pm (childcare provided)*
- *MomsConnect, 2/17 at 6:00pm*
- *Lenten Series and Dinner, 2/17 & 2/24 at 6:00pm*
- *Kairos Ministry placements & cookies due 2/28*

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