

Merrill Foto News Article
March 2019

United Way recognizes that being a better parent is a key part of the health, both mental and physical, in the well-being of your child. Through United Way we support both health and education as important to a child's development. Research has shown that when both parents are involved in their children's lives, children are less likely to use drugs and alcohol; commit crimes; drop out of school; live in poverty or experience teen pregnancy.

Strong families can mean a stronger community. The National Fatherhood Initiative recently sent United Way is documentation on "10 Ways to Be a Better Father" -- but the information applies to both parents -- mothers and fathers. Being more actively engaged in the lives of your children will bring both satisfaction and reward as you make a difference in your own children's lives.

Here are the key points:

- 1) Respect Your Children's Mother or Father: When children see their parents respecting each other, they are more likely to feel that they are also accepted and respected.
- 2) Spend time with your Children: Kid's grow up so quickly. Missed opportunities are lost forever.
- 3) Earn the right to be heard: Converse with your children in a two-way dialogue. Take time to listen to their ideas and problems.
- 4) Discipline with love: Parent who discipline in a calm and fair manner show love for their children.
- 5) Be a role model: Set the examples you want your children to live by -- showing love and respect for others
- 6) Be a teacher: Parents use every day examples to help their children learn the basic lessons of life; i.e. manners, acceptance of others, hygiene, right from wrong, honesty and much more.
- 7) Eat together as a family: It's an important part of healthy family living. It is also a good time for parents to listen and give advice.
- 8) Read to your children: Step away from the television, video games and electronic devices. You can read to them when they are young and instill a love of reading in them to help ensure they have a lifetime of personal and career growth.
- 9) Show affection: Every day you can let your child know that you love them.
- 10) Realize that a parent's job is never done: As children grow into adulthood and start their own families -- stay involved and share wisdom and advice.

Visit their face book page at facebook.com/nationalfatherhoodinitiative. To support the Merrill Area United Way and make a difference in our local community then please mail a donation to MAUW, PO Box 813, Merrill, WI 54452. For more information about MAUW visit our website at merrillareunitedway.org.