

The ONE Thing to Teach Your Kids

Parent Guide by Hatch Brighter

Inner Growth

Want to raise brave & authentic kids who are true to who they are? The most important thing you can do is focus more on their inner growth, starting today.

Why is this important?

In order to feel whole and happy our kids must balance their inner selves: mind, body, spirit, emotions and relationships. Imbalance in any one of these areas can lead to unhappiness as they are all connected. Research over the last several decades demonstrates the fact that you cannot separate the mind, body and spirit in health and healing.

Stanford psychology professor, Carol Dweck shares that when we are focused on the external qualities about us, we limit who we are meant to be.

When we become externally motivated, we tend to:

1. Care a lot about whether people think we are smart or not smart
2. Avoid learning challenges where we might make mistakes
3. Try to hide mistakes rather than trying to correct them
4. Not deal well with frustration and setbacks, sometimes giving up or cheating

How do I teach this?

Start focusing on your & your kids' inner selves... the stuff you can't see or measure... the stuff that doesn't seek to please others. A big part of this for parents is focusing on inner validation instead of external validation.

Be curious and open minded to see how even you may be led or motivated by external forces. This is the only way you will be able to see it in your kiddos. Be analytical about all the external control and motivators around you and your kids.

Ask yourself:

"Did my child just do that because he/she was seeking recognition or validation from me? Or because they wanted to do it from deep within?"

Kid-speak examples for you to use:

- "I love how hard you are working."
- "You are hopping on one leg."
- "I love your heart."
- "I love the way you think."
- "I saw that you made a mistake but you tried again. I love your perseverance."
- "This was really hard for you and you didn't give up."