

## ***Parents: the Most Influential Teachers***

As a parent and your child's most influential teacher, what have you to offer?

### **1. The necessities**

- Children need food, shelter, protection from harm and disease...

### **2. Security**

- ...and acceptance by people who will always be there for them.

### **3. Guidance**

- Don't make your children's decisions, but help them make wise ones.

### **4. Encouragement**

- Praise, not criticism, leads to improvement.

### **5. Example**

- Like it or not, you're their #1 role model.

### **6. Discipline**

- There's nothing wrong with rules when they're fair and lovingly applied.

### **7. The chance to be Responsible**

- Only by giving the chance to fail do you give the chance to succeed.

### **8. History**

- Let your children know the continuum they're a part of.

### **9. Humor**

- Raise kids who can make a joke and take a joke.

### **10. Lifelong Interests**

- There's more to life than TV; invite them to fish when you're going fishing.

### **11. Enrichment**

- There's more to life than TV; explore a museum together.

### **12. Family**

- If family is important to you, it will be to them too.

### **13. Extended Family**

- Each new person met enlarges your child's world.

### **14. Values**

- Teach honesty, tolerance, democracy and non-violence – by example.

### **15. Love: our greatest human need**

- It is you – not things – that they need. Give yourself freely.

What are the 'costs' of active parenting? Financially, they're about the same as passive parenting; most items on the list are free. The real 'costs' are time and involvement, but as you give each of these you soon discover that the rewards -- for both you and your child -- make your investment worthwhile and enjoyable. And, in examining the costs, one should also consider what are the costs -- both for now and the future -- if the investment of time and involvement is not made. Always remember: *Parenting isn't something that happens -- it is something you do.*

from *Jivin' Johnny's A Teacher's Notebook:*  
*reflections and inspirations from the classroom.*  
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