

Teamwork

Teamwork is a coveted skill in the workplace, teaches empathy, and increases learning capabilities. But today's tech-centric kids are often focused on their individual efforts rather than on collaboration. Teamwork is one of the most important skills children need to get ahead in the world today, according to a Pew Research Center survey.

But with these six techniques, parents can teach their children teamwork.

1. Sign Kids Up for Organized Activities

Placing your children in an extracurricular activity that involves collaboration with a group is a great way to teach them the value of teamwork—especially if the children come from a single-child household. The key is to sign your young ones up for an activity that caters to their interests.

2. Embrace Group Socialization and Bonding

There are various games and activities that build teamwork in a group environment, but the trick is keeping the activities both fun and discreet. Let the phrase “teamwork activity” slip, and you’ll likely hear groans from older kids who probably don’t want to play an organized game.

Parents can organize some of these teamwork-based games intended for all age groups for play dates, birthday parties, or similar activities:

- Preschoolers. Follow the Leader
- Elementary schoolers. Scavenger Hunt
- Middle schoolers. Who Am I
- High schoolers. Egg Drop

3. Fill Screen Time with Positive Examples

Kids will often find their heroes and mentors in the TV shows they watch, so it’s important to fill their allotted screen time with programs that teach important character strengths. Common Sense Media’s teamwork-promoting TV guide shares an excellent round-up of shows where teamwork is “intrinsic to the story, being repeated several times in the actions of a lead character, and ‘wins’ over character flaws such as thinking only of oneself.”

Some favorites from the guide include:

- Preschoolers (2–4). *Wonder Pets*, *Jake and the Neverland Pirates*, and *Paw Patrol*
- Little Kids (5–7). *Phineas and Ferb* and *H2O: Mermaid Adventures*
- Big Kids (8–9). *Descendants* and *The Amazing Race*
- Tweens (10–12). *Xena: Warrior Princess*
- Teens (13+). *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Scrubs*, and *Heroes*

4. Teach Kids to Encourage Others

Teaching children to look outside of their individual bubbles and notice the needs of others builds teamwork. Encourage your kids to cheer for their fellow teammates at sports events, praise their classmates' academic accomplishments, and ask their friends about important life events.

5. Promote Unity at Home

Parents know the best teaching experiences will happen under their own roofs, so the household needs a positive emphasis on teamwork. Teach and demonstrate to your kids that a successful household thrives because of everyone's cooperation. Give your young ones household chores, ask them to help their siblings or grandparents, and praise the moments when your kids make efforts to cooperate with others.

6. Read Stories about Working Together

Children's books offer timely lessons on teamwork. Read your little ones some of these classic books that offer valuable team-building takeaways:

- *Frederick*. A different take on the classic Aesop fable *The Ant and the Grasshopper*, *Frederick* focuses on a field mouse who spends summer sitting on a rock by himself collecting colors and dreams while his mouse family collects food for the winter. When the food runs out, Frederick entertains the mice with stories and poems, proving everyone's role is valuable.
- *Amelia Bedelia*. The quirky housekeeper Amelia Bedelia constantly messes up basic chores to hilarious results—dusting the furniture by putting dust on it or changing the towels by cutting them into new shapes. It illustrates an important teamwork message: communicate properly to avoid misunderstanding.
- *The Biggest Pumpkin Ever*. Unbeknownst to each other, two mice are taking care of the same pumpkin—one at morning and one at night. They must agree to work together and share their ideas, turning the pumpkin into a jack-o'-lantern for Halloween.

Working on a team isn't always easy. Kids disagree and personalities clash. But it's in the team setting where kids will learn valuable problem-solving skills and build defining character traits. Practice some of these tips with your children so they can master teamwork.