

## BEING A FAMILY THAT VALUES SELF-CARE

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I looked in the mirror quite a bit when I was a kid. As a young child, I made faces constantly, trying to come up with silly expressions. When I started dance classes, I spent hours in front of studio mirrors every weeknight, aiming to perfect my technique. By the time I was in middle school, I felt so caught up with what I saw in the mirror it was hard to see myself as the beautiful person God created me to be. My parents offered me affirmation, encouragement, and support. Still, as a perfectionist, I tended to fall into self-criticism patterns. When I constantly compared myself to others, I lost sight of the wonderfully made, unique girl God loved unconditionally. Caring about others' opinions often precedes self-care, and I often felt overwhelmed and anxious.



As parents, we can't control how our kids see themselves. The world and its demands often dictate that. But we can help them find tools to see themselves as the beautiful beings God created them to be. One way that we can help our kids practice self-care is by modeling it. It's often hard to pause and practice self-care when making lunches, taxiing to sports practices, and juggling jobs. But we need to remind ourselves that self-care isn't *selfish*. It sets an excellent example for our kids. Self-care tools help us treat our whole selves with the kindness God intends towards his children, and they can be enjoyed as a family.

### As a family, try these practical ways to practice self-care.

- *Physical Self-Care—Be active, then rest!*
  - Go on a walk, and enjoy nature.
  - Play kickball, jump rope, or climb on the playground. Don't be afraid to be a kid again—do it *with* your kids!
  - Set a sleep schedule and value getting enough sleep. Make bedtime fun with stories and songs.
  - Stay hydrated and make dinner fun. Ask for your kids' help finding healthy recipes, and enjoy cooking together.
- *Mental and Emotional Self-Care—Feel what you feel and express yourself.*
  - Take deep breaths together.
  - Spend quiet time journaling.
  - If your kids feel big feelings, see if they want to paint a picture. Let them use colors and shapes to help describe their emotions. Show interest in their work and ask them to explain it to you.

- *Spiritual Self-Care—Spend quality time with God.*
  - Read God's Word together and talk about it.
  - Have a living room "worship time" as you dance and sing along to worship music.
  - Make a list of things you are thankful for and thank God.

It wasn't until I began to value self-care that I developed a positive self-image and loved myself as God's creation. As you practice self-care together, your kids will learn to see themselves as perfectly flawed, divinely formed humans who can shine God's light in the world. They'll learn to respect themselves as carefully formed creations of God and care for others as well.

Want to do a deep dive? Check out Family Fire's article [Learning to Practice Self Care](#).

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