



How to Build a Good Marriage... Even When You're Busy with Kids



Little ones are a gift from God, but what stress they can add to a marriage! They demand so much of your time and energy that it is easy for couples to drift apart when kids come along. How can you stay close during those childrearing years? Can I remind you of a few things (you probably already know)?

Build good habits into your marriage. For example, kiss when you wake up, when you go to bed, and when you leave each other. (This means you will kiss at least three times a day!) Good habits can help you do the right thing without thinking about it. What good habits can you start today?

Notice and appreciate the small things. When I was knee deep in diapers, I picked up one and my husband had left a quick note thanking me for being a good mom. I cried! When you are overwhelmed with little people's needs, it's hard to see anything else. When you look for the good and go the extra step to say thank you, it can push away discontentment.

Stay united. Your little snookums are precious, but they are smart and know how to get what they want—divide and conquer! Present a united front! There will be plenty of times that you will disagree, but work it out behind closed doors. By respecting each other (and lovingly confronting in private), you are teaching respect to your kids.

Spend time together. Have you noticed that even when you plan to spend time together, someone always gets sick or has a crisis? This will look different for each couple, but make this a priority! (The best thing you can do for your kids is build a strong marriage.) Cuddle early in the morning, sit and talk for 30 minutes (yes, you can train your kids to play and not interrupt), go to bed together every night, swap kids with friends (or any willing person) and get out of the house every other week.

Pray for each other. If you are not praying for your mate, who is? Ask, "How can I pray for you?" I keep an index card in the *Power of a Praying Wife* (by Stormie Omartian) and pray one each morning for my husband.

Forgive quickly.

Fight for your marriage. Don't give up! Think back to what made you love this person in the beginning. Yes, it will take time to rebuild (if you've drifted apart) but it is worth it... for you and your kids.

