



10 Minutes a Day

Prepared for Eagle Ranch by
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Living in America in the 21st century is hectic and stressful. Many families are constantly on the run; parents seem to never stop cooking, working, bathing kids, dressing kids, driving car pools, providing child care, keeping house...always something -- seven days a week, 365 days a year!

Years ago a *20/20* television program videotaped a week in the life of an American family. The family consisted of a mother, father, and two children. At the end of the week, after videotaping 18 hours a day of each family member, it was found that the mother and father had spent a grand total of *six seconds* devoted to one another! Worse still, the parents devoted only a little more time to each child, one-on-one.

What's wrong when families are too busy to devote one-on-one quality time with each other? We simply have too many responsibilities and obligations. There are two general truths about families today:

- 1) Parents will *never* "get it all done."
- 2) Children and parents need quality, positive, intimate, one-on-one time with each other *each and every day*.

It's a matter of both priorities and skills. Many parents deeply desire to have quality one-on-one time with each child (priority), but don't know *how* to get it done (skill). Here are a few ideas that might help.

- 1) Commit to have 10 minutes a day of one-on-one time with each child. If 10 minutes a day is too much, then commit 5 minutes a day to each child. (Note: It is far better to be successful with 5 minutes a day than to fail at trying to give 10 minutes a day.)
- 2) During your 10 minutes a day, do nothing else; turn off the phone, turn off the T.V., and get rid of all distractions. Do nothing else but be with your child (i.e., not when driving, cooking, working, or being with a third person).
- 3) Make it a positive time of talk and play. Don't use this time for work, school, or completing any tasks. Children need talk and play -- make this the time and place on a daily basis.
- 4) Do: Let the child choose the activity, have eye contact and get at eye level, play, listen, *get on the floor*, crawl, praise, imitate, hug, hold, reflect, describe, laugh, sing, read aloud, make up a story, tell a story, and ignore irritable behavior.
- 5) Don't: Criticize, direct, correct, educate, ask questions, or give commands.

The road to material wealth is to systematically save a set amount of money each and every month. To invest 10 minutes a day in each child will lead to huge rewards -- it will increase the child's self esteem and warm the heart of the parent.