



# Ten ways to Teach your Children to be ProLife

Use these ten suggestions as a starting point for your own strategies as a prolife parent.

## 1. Celebrate pregnancy

New life is a wonder, a miracle. Let your children see you affirm this by your attitudes and actions. Rejoice in the news of a pregnancy. Marvel at the beauty of a woman who is with child. Reach out with practical help to a single parent. Pray aloud for the babies in your midst, born and unborn.

Even when news of a pregnancy creates initial upset, it is possible to work through such emotions to a response of welcome and a sense of awe. Let your children see you make that journey.

## 2. Learn Natural Family Planning

Natural Family Planning is a safe, effective, drug-free, device-free way to regulate birth. (And no, we are not talking here of the 1950s' 'rhythm' method but 21st century methods.) Taught and practised properly, NFP involves more than assessing the biological mechanics; it affirms profound values relating to the communication of the couple, respect for the woman's body and for the gift of life itself. Because of the attitudes and lifestyle choices it offers, NFP has a natural spillover effect on the values you impart to your children about life, love and relationships.

## 3. Affirm sexuality

While avoiding gender stereotypes, look for ways to affirm the sexuality of your children. Share your wonder at the fact that human beings are born male and female. In their shared humanity men and women are wonderfully the same. In their maleness or femaleness they are wonderfully different. Admire your child's developing maturity, physical and emotional. Model what it means to show respect for the opposite sex. Be open to their questions and be ready to enter into discussion. Don't be afraid of 'not knowing' all the answers; join your children on their learning curve.

## 4. Discuss 'life' issues

Discuss 'life' issues with your children as they arise in the news. Make it your business to understand the essential issues in public debates about euthanasia, embryonic stem cells, abortion and abortifacient contraceptives. Inform your conscience intelligently, prayerfully and in the spirit of the faith community to which you belong. May your children observe you to be a thinking Catholic with a thirst for truth and love.

## 5. Be consistent

The sanctity of life is a theme permeating the whole of Christian teaching. It's not just about abortion or euthanasia. It's also about our attitudes to war and capital punishment. It is about the way we treat the elderly, people with disabilities, refugees, and women who have suffered an abortion.

## 6. Vote for life

Be conscientious in your civic duty. At election time discuss your views and opinions as a family. Acknowledge the 'life' issues at stake and how they will influence your vote.

## 7. Subscribe to prolife publications

Prolife magazines, pictures depicting the beauty of human life... make these available in the home (on the kitchen bench, on the coffee table). By what they see you reading, let your children 'see' the values that you hold dear.

## 8. Take part in prolife rallies

Action speaks louder than words. The thrill of being part of a large rally, marching shoulder to shoulder with people who share your deepest values... this is a powerful memory-maker in the life of a young person. If for no other reason, attend a prolife march to deepen your child's moral education.

## 9. Wonder at life

Develop a contemplative attitude to the gift of life. With your children, wonder aloud at the beauty of nature: the change in the seasons, the first steps of their baby sister. Watch a documentary together on the beginnings of life. By your own sense of awe, let them catch a sense that life is the gift of the Creator.

## 10. In a crisis, choose life

A teenage pregnancy, a baby born with a disability, an unplanned pregnancy when finances are tight....the gift of life can place a strain on relationships and test us to the core. This is precisely the time when our prolife witness counts the most. Let's learn from those who have walked this path...

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