Twitter Thread by David Morris



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Parents have to choose their battles.

8 fights worth picking with your kids:

Parenting is hard.

We're all figuring it out as we go.

One of the most difficult things to sort through is when to take a stand,

And when to let up.

There's no magic formula for figuring this out,

But these are a few things I've found worth squaring off with your kids over.

The Reading Fight:

Make your kids read.

Of my four kids, one was a natural reader who always had a book in his hands.

For the others, it was a fight.

But it's a fight worth picking,

Because reading is tied to everything from cognitive development to the ability to focus.

My wife teaches ACT prep and works with students on college admissions.

Of all the tips, tricks, and hacks she can provide, there's one thing she says she can't overcome ■

A kid who didn't read.

Make your kids read now.

They'll thank you later.

The Outside Fight:

Make your kids go outside.

The natural world teaches us things.

Valuable truths like:

- There's a way things work that I must adapt to (because it won't adapt to me)

- There are things I have no control over

- There are cycles and seasons to life

Plus, outside there's sunshine, fresh air, and exercise waiting for them.

Most importantly, nature is full of things in short supply in our world ■

Discovery. Wonder. Peace. Joy.

Your kids are surrounded by artificial.

They need REAL.

Make them go outside to find it.

The Work Fight:

Make your kids work.

I’m saddened by how many parents don’t require their kids to lift a finger at home.

As my mom used to say:

"You don't get the benefits of being in the family without taking your share of the responsibilities."

There are age-appropriate ways kids can help around the house from 2 on.

They need the hard work, life skills, and ownership that comes from pitching in.

Plus, there are priceless life principles you can only learn with a mop in your hand.

Let sweat be their teacher.

The Meal Fight:

Make your kids eat as a family.

There are studies that outline all sorts of benefits from regular family mealtime.

These benefits range from a lower risk of depression to decreased drug use.

But that's not why my family eats together.

It's less about what family meals accomplish,

And more about what they represent.

Our lives are a blur of incessant activity.

Meals together are a physical pause to recover a truth so easily sacrificed at the altar of busyness ■

Nothing's more important than family.

The Boredom Fight:

Make your kids live with boredom.

Kids need unscheduled time.

And, odd as it sounds, boredom is a skill.

I think much of the movement today toward mindfulness, stillness, and meditation,

Is a desire to develop the ability to be bored.

It's hard as a parent to deal with the assault of boredom complaints.

But if you give in and fill up their time with external stimuli, you'll raise an activity addict.

Resist the urge to give them a distraction.

There will always be much to do.

Make them learn how to be.

The "Me First" Fight:

Make your kids go last.

Not every time for everything.

But enough to remember that the world doesn't revolve around them.

If left on their own, most kids will elevate themselves above all others.

First in line.

The biggest piece.

Me. Me. Me.

There's only one way to break this natural inclination.

You must periodically make your kids...

Go last in line.

Take the smallest piece.

Give up the remote.

Do someone else's chores.

Get their least favorite choice.

They won't like it, but they need it.

The Awkward Conversation Fight:

Make your kids have uncomfortable conversations with you.

As kids get older, the things you need to talk about with them get more difficult.

For both of you.

Sex, dating, body image, values...

Can all be difficult subjects to broach.

Your kids will roll their eyes and resist.

You will stumble and stutter.

But you must see through the awkwardness.

They want your perspective, lessons learned, and wisdom.

You want the pattern of open communication it establishes.

Wade into uncomfortable waters with them.

The Limitation Fight:

Make your kids live within limits.

Learning to live within limits is a valuable life skill.

In fact, many adult problems arise from an inability to accept them.

Problems like:

- Debt
- Overcommitment
- Exhaustion

Come from ignoring our limitations.

No one lives a life without limitations.

And you wouldn't want to.

They mature us.

If you don't introduce and enforce them,

You're hurting your kids.

Screen time limits, dietary limits, activity limits, and schedule limits are all good.

Teach your kids to embrace them.

As a parent, you have to pick your battles.

These are some stands I've been glad we've taken.

They're not easy, but they're worth the fight.

As I often say to my kids ■

"I know you don't think this is important,

But one day you'll be so thankful you had parents who did."

Thanks for investing your time in my thread.

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