

More on Family Synergy - Facing the Odds to Win

Myrna Lapres
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In 2008, the New York Giants were not supposed to win the Super Bowl. The undefeated New England Patriots were considered the favorite. But the wild-card Giants took home the trophy.

What happened to tip the scales in their favor? Some analysts feel the Giants were able to synergize their determination and talents to beat the odds.

Given our current culture, some believe that the families face odds like the Giants. Instant access to media, alcohol and drugs, parents stretched by balancing work and home and other hurdles make raising children particularly difficult. How can parents lead their families to the same kind of success? Here are five practical ideas to help parents overcome the odds and develop a synergized family.

1. Increase family interaction

Communication is essential for family success because it enables family members to share thoughts and opinions, make decisions, solve problems and develop interpersonal relationships. And the best way to heighten communication is to increase family interaction. Cutting back on individual activities in favor of family time, eating meals together as a family, having a family night and scheduling regular family vacations are some of the best ways to increase interaction. www.coachmyrna.org/coachmyrna-blog/the-power-of-weekly-family-time

2. Establish a common goal

Unity in any group is usually based on the desire for a shared purpose. Whether it is called a goal, objective, purpose or vision, parents can increase family synergy and unity by frequently discussing what it is they want their family to achieve in life. Making a family goal poster is a great way to get everyone involved. Get a stack of old magazines and begin cutting. Make more than one poster -- fun things to do together as a family, ways to show we love each other, what we want to do on our next vacation, etc.

3. Recognize interdependence

Family members are affected and influenced by the actions of each other. A successful, cohesive family teaches every member to be responsible for doing his or her part. And that failure for doing one's part can adversely impact the rest of the family.

One of the best ways to help family members recognize interdependence is to teach cooperation and teamwork by playing together. Jeff Spiers, a father of four from Englewood, Colo., expresses it this way: "My boys learn it on their baseball teams. When a throw is bad from short to first, the first baseman offers encouragement. In this way, the boys help coach each other and learn their reliance on each other." www.coachmyrna.org/coachmyrna-blog/family-synergy-being-in-tune

4. Work together

Physical and mental efforts required to work together to accomplish something can be one of the more rewarding ways to synergize a family. Our family was heavily into scouts -- my husband was the scoutmaster and all three sons became eagle scouts. Our whole family participated in the annual canned food drives and support each son as he planned and carried out his eagle project. The sense of accomplishment we felt as a family through these service projects was incredibly rewarding.

5. Demonstrate love and compassion

Unity and synergy in the family rely heavily on individual members feeling as though they are understood and loved despite their personal flaws. Use kind words, caring tones and a gentle touch. Look for opportunities to praise one another, even when behavior is not exemplary. And, if children are whiny and complaining, take time to actively listen to them and restate back their reasons for feeling frustrated. Acting with love, patience and compassion toward each other builds the long-lasting positive atmosphere required for successful family life.