Cheat sheet for Great Parents:

- **Validate your child’s emotions.** Try making sense of their emotions, such as "You are sad when I have to leave for work" or "You are angry when I won’t let you have ice cream for dinner." This lets your child know you understand why they are upset.

- **Set limits.** Despite what they say, children need limits and rules to feel secure, safe, and protected. When children know what to expect of their environment (ex. a consistent dinner time, bedtime routine, or amount of TV time), they feel more confident.

- **Give specific praise!** Go out of your way to give specific praise about the behavior you value (ex. "You are so supportive of the family by helping to take out the garbage!).

- **Make eye contact.**
Does Parenting Matter?

Of course it matters! From the day your kid is born, they are learning how to treat people by the way you treat them. Children who grow up in families with lots of fighting learn that is how families treat each other; they often create families of their own that fight a lot. However, kids who see their parents treating others with kindness will learn to do the same.

In other words, our kids model our behavior because we are teaching them early on how the world works.

When babies cry, their parent usually comes running, which makes them feel safe and secure. This sense of security is also known as attachment or connection. Through your parenting style, your kids develop an attachment style.

The Goal: Authoritative Parenting

An ideal parent
- is warm, attentive, responsive, and sensitive to their child's needs
- is firm and reasonable
- uses teaching moments (insists on certain behaviors and provides reasons why)
- gradually allows the child to make decisions in areas where she/he is ready

The Result: Secure Attachment

Because of your authoritative parenting, your child
- is upbeat
- shows self-control
- is cooperative
- has higher self-esteem
- does well in school

Why is the goal authoritative parenting?

Research shows children of authoritative parents are better adjusted because they learnt to become more independent at a pace that follows their growth and development.

These learning opportunities help to grow their self-esteem and learn to bounce back when times become challenging.

Parent involvement and acceptance help to protect the child from stress.

Additionally, children are far more likely to agree with and accept rules they view to be fair and reasonable rather than random.

For more information:
- infoaboutkids.org
- American Psychological Association
  apa.org/topics/parenting
- zerothethree.org