

The Best Nine Minutes, Episode 86



Power of Moms A Gathering Place for Deliberate Mothers

With April Perry and Amy Makechnie

Amy listened to mini podcast at Power of Moms called “Three Unbelievably Simple Parenting Ideas (that Work!)” and applied it to her life and family. This podcast is all about what she found out

The gist of the original podcast is this: The first three minutes after the kids wake up, the three minutes immediately following the kids’ school, and the three minutes prior to bedtime are the most crucial. These three minutes give the opportunity to bond, holding at bay the logistics of life such as “put your backpack in your room...”

Right away Amy could tell that implementing this thinking helped relationships with her kids. When her kids were little, meaningful moments happened all the time because they were together so much. Now that they are 15, 13, 10, and 7 years, they are much more independent. It may be more difficult to figure out how to bond with older children and in this podcast April and Amy offer suggestions on how to make that time more meaningful.

Morning minutes:

Amy found that the best nine minutes can also be the hardest nine minutes because they are parts of the day prone to fatigue. One thing that Amy started doing this summer was to get up earlier than her children and read something uplifting. When kids are in school, it can be difficult because there is a schedule that needs to be followed but Amy found that she didn’t need to be talking during those three minutes. Amy will sit on the bed, and wake them up by running her fingers through their hair, or give butterfly kisses on her face. For her one little girl these tender wake ups change her day. Instead of barging in, turning on the light, and reminding her kids “Get up! You don’t want to be late!” she talks quietly and gently.

April agrees with Amy and mentions that when she opens the door, she quietly says, “Good morning boys, time to get up” and sits by their bed and rubs their backs.

After school Time:

Try to have your eyes light up when you see your child. Act happy to see your children. One day April’s little girl said, “Oh I am so glad you are home. I missed you!” She responded with, “I don’t think that you

really missed us. I think we bug you when we are home.” Amy says, “My children may sometimes feel that they are interrupting my life, but they really are my life.”

Amy found that every child has a different personality so what those three minutes look like may be different according to which child you are with. One of her children doesn't want to be bombarded with talking after school, but personal touch combined with something to eat means the world to him. Our goal is to use those few minutes in a way that will be meaningful to the child.

Bedtime minutes:

Bedtime can be so hard: we are all tired! But once again, Amy found that she doesn't have to be talking. She can just be sitting by their bed with the lights off, scratching their back. The three minutes at bedtime can be tricky for teenagers who often stay up later than parents. Amy suggests that maybe those three minutes include just a kiss, eye contact, asking about the big events of the day, etc. There are some circumstances that aren't compatible with being home when the kids get up, home from school, or at bedtime. Last week Amy left early on a trip so she left a note on the counter for the kids to find in the morning. Call them, text them, or leave fun notes when your physical presence isn't possible.

Adding to the nine minutes: Goodbyes

April noticed that those three minutes when children are leaving the house seem to be really important too. It can be such a chaotic time. April's mom was such a master in those three minutes. She would do the Macarena down the driveway as a farewell. She would also sweetly mimic Cinderella by saying, “Goodbye! Goodbye!” It means a lot to a child to see Mom or Dad smiling and waving instead of a door shutting.

Transcribed by: Jessee Stewart