

Twenty-six letters in the alphabet. Thirty or thirty-one days in a month. One way to approach "A Parent's Alphabet" is to take the letters one day at a time. Set aside a few moments each day to think about what the letter stands for and try in some way to make it a reality. Next month, you can start all over again. But always remember that Arms, Books, Caring and Doors are equally important – just as important as X-ray, Yelling and Z for the end.

A Parent's Alphabet

A is for Arms, arms that hold and arms that support and arms that push when they have to.

B is for Books, which should abound in every home; and for Boredom, which can't stay long if books are there.

C is for the Children, and the Caring and the Crying, which sometimes come together all at once.

D is for Doors, which you sometimes have to help them open and through which they have to go someday never to return unchanged; and for Discipline and Dignity, which you owe every child.

E is for Everything you hope for them; for the Easier you hope it will be for them; and for Education, which takes place at least as much at home as in school.

F is for Foolish mistakes you make with your kids; and for the Freedom they must have to make their own.

G is for Grandparents, who can add tradition and wisdom to children's lives; and for Growth, which parents and kids can experience together.

H is for Home, which is only sometimes a house where a child feels wanted and loved.

I is for Ignorance, which darkens the world and is sometimes mistaken for Innocence.

J is for Jealousy, which creeps into so many relationships; and for Joy, which can push it out.

K is for Kickball, and tag and hid-and-seek and all those other adult-less games kids need to play; and for Kissing, and hugging, which nobody does enough of.

L is for Love, of course.

M is for the Memory all parents have of what childhood was like for them; and for Money, which can never substitute for love no matter how lavishly given; and for Manners, which make living easier.

N is for Nurturing, the giving of love and care, which only sometimes comes naturally.

O is for Occupation, which takes so much of your time; and for the Openness, which exists when kids and parents really work at it.

P is for Presents, which are easy to give; and for Presence, which is harder; and for Parenthood, which is only partly a biological function; and for the Patience it takes to see you through it.

Q is for Questions, which are so easy to turn off and so hard to turn back on.

R is for Rest, which it seems never comes while the kids are young; and for Reward, which you get when you look in their faces or hold their hands.

S is for Summer, which seems endless; and for School, where you ought to feel welcome; for the Stories you know but seldom tell; and for Shoulders, which sometimes are drenched with tears.

T is for Time, which there never seems to be enough of; and for Teachers who try to understand.

U is for the Upper hand, which you try so hard to keep; and for the Understanding that you try so hard to have.

V is for the Virtue of overcoming all those roadblocks life seems to throw just when everything's going well.

W is for the Whys, which can drive you up the wall; and the Wisdom it takes to answer them.

X is for the X-ray of the broken bone you both cried over; and for the Xtra love it takes to be a parent.

Y is for Yelling, which helps only temporarily; and for being Young, which is only partly a matter of years.

Z is for the end, the end of alphabets, the end of childhood, but never the end of love.

Some additional thoughts about:
