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Family & Relationships

The A to Z Guide to Raising Happy, Confident Kids
Jenn Berman
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Over the last twenty years, parents and educators have looked for ways to instill confidence in children. While confidence is useful for acquiring skills and tackling problems, the process of creating confident children is sometimes misguided because parents and educators don't have solid, realistic resources for children.

Building confident kids doesn't have to be hard, says Berman, author of *The A to Z Guide to Raising Happy, Confident Kids*. Her book provides gentle, practical advice that any family can incorporate into daily life.

As a licensed therapist who counseled marriages, families, and children, Berman learned firsthand what works when teaching kids confidence. Over the years, she has shared that knowledge in her award-winning parenting column, *Dr. Jenn*, on her radio talk show, and on TV shows, such as *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, *Interventions*, and the *Today* show. Berman is also a mother who recognizes that parents need down-to-earth guidance for raising kids.

The author organizes her guide into twenty-six short, easy-to-read chapters. Each chapter covers a specific parenting topic and is assigned to one letter of the alphabet. Most chapters look at common hurdles, such as developing healthy eating habits (in the first chapter, "A Is for Apple") or getting enough sleep (in "Z Is for Getting Zzzs"). Other chapters cover less serious, but still important issues, such as pets ("K Is for Kitty Cat") and money matters ("Q Is for Quarters").

The book also looks at issues that affect specific types of families. In "D Is for Double Trouble," Berman writes about the ins and outs of raising twins and "S Is for SOS (Save Our Sibling)" provides advice for parents of more than one child.

Berman believes that the relationship between parents is the emotional foundation of a family, so she dedicates several chapters to help parents handle their own issues. In "W Is for Wedded Bliss," the author stresses that parents need to communicate and connect with each

other. When beginning a serious discussion, for example, Berman advises parents to start from a loving place, use reflexive listening, and even take a short time out when discussions turn argumentative. For connecting, she recommends that parents need to spend time together without their kids at least once a month.

Berman also gives special advice for fathers in the chapter “H is for Hero.” Because fathers are the role model on whom kids based their future relationships and interactions with others, she advises fathers to be get involved in their child’s life and listen to what their child feels is important.

The guide is perfect for parents who relied on baby and infant books and now need a resource for their three- to ten-year-old. Although the chapters have a general perspective on topics, Berman provides a number of tools and tables for parents to glean specific information. She also references a variety of books for anyone interested in learning more. Throughout the guide, Berman states “…parents are the mirrors in which kids see themselves reflected.” With *The A to Z Guide to Raising Happy, Confident Kids*, parents can make the choices that instill confidence in their children and possibly in themselves as well.

Katerie Prior