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## Parents, Hang in There—It's All Worth It

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## Parents, Hang in There—It's All Worth It

By Kim Nassoiy  
UCF Forum columnist  
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One of the greatest blessings in my life is being a mom.

I have a son and daughter, now in their 20s. From the moment I found out I was expecting, the joy of having a new life to love and cherish was overwhelming. Each step of the way—hearing the heartbeat, seeing the sonogram, picking out names and preparing their rooms—only made me fall more in love. I remember holding each of them for the first time and feeling that fierce mama bear protectiveness.

Through the years, I have given up sleep, meals and personal time to devote my life to them. I have driven hours to watch a 10-minute band show, volunteered time supporting their activities, and supplied snacks and drinks for every sport you can name.

When I look back, I wouldn't have it any other way.

Being at all the practices, shows and games, even the basketball tournament on Mother's Day, showed my children they were my priority. I learned this from my own parents, who supported my brother, sister and me in everything we did.

I will admit, at the time I felt spread pretty thin. I felt like I couldn't do it all and maybe I wasn't doing it well. We may have eaten too much pizza, although my nurse friend said pizza covers a lot of the food groups. My house could have never passed the white-glove test and don't get me started on the state of my car. I was lucky to make sure oil changes were not too overdue.

The funny thing is, I may have felt like I could have done more, but my children didn't.

Now that they are adults and we talk about their childhood, they assure me that I did things right. I was always there for them and supported their interests. Their desire was to be loved unconditionally and for me to be present in their lives.

All the adult priorities, like a clean car or gourmet dinner, were of no significance to them.

Now I'm getting a second chance at this parenting thing with my stepson, who's 10. I feel more confident in the strategies I use and the choices I make to help him be successful in school and life. I bounce ideas off my kids to see what helped them and what didn't.

I even got his vote of confidence one day when he told me: "You get me." I can't do much better than that.

So to all the parents out there just beginning the journey or deep in the trenches: Hang in there. Love on your kids and be there for them. It is a short time from the toddler years to high school graduation and you don't want to miss a thing.

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