

Daily Reunions

Family Reunions are important. They matter. Not just the once-a-year get-togethers with the cousins, but the regular, end-of-the-day reunions with your child. How do you reconnect after a day apart? What do you do, for example, on the way home? How do you put yourself back in touch with your child?

Here are some ideas from other parents:

- "We both have a small snack in the car- usually fruit or pretzels."
- "I make it a point to not answer the cell phone or make calls in that first half hour or so. I want my attention on my child."
- "We usually sing. Not well, but loudly!"
- "My motto is 'stop, look , and listen.' Before we even get in the car, I stop, slow down, look right in his eyes, and try to really listen to what he's telling me."
- "I always check the lesson / possibility plan posted on the bulletin board outside the classroom door to see what they did that day, and read the Journals that the teachers email to me. It gives me something specific to talk about."
- "I mentions something I did at work that day, maybe what I had for lunch. Once I told her about a bird that flew in the store where I work. After a while, she usually tells me about her day. But if she just feels like being quiet., I'm quiet along with her."
- " I think hugs and pats and any physical affection make a big difference in reconnection."
- "A friend once said, "The best piece of advice I ever read about working and parenting was 'Spend fifteen minutes sitting alone somewhere between work and day care.' It was hard to do – everything in my life then was so rushed, but I was getting crazy. I forced myself to have a cup of tea by myself, *without* doing work while I drank it, every day before I picked up the kids. It made the biggest difference."

At the end of the day, we're tired; we just want to get *home*. In some ways, however, thinking like this is a holdover from our childless days, when the time between work and home didn't count for anything, and home was a place you could *rest*. Children change all that. Now between work and home we need to reconnect with our children in body and spirit...When we get home, we have to love and teach some more; rest is again postponed. If you yearn for a better end of the day but feel too hurried even to try anything new, think more about that cup of tea.