7 parenting resolutions we should make for 2025, according to experts

Forget the usual slew of plans to exercise, batch cook and forego chocolate; these are the resolutions we should actually make an effort with, writes Kayleigh Dray

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There is no doubt becoming a parent changes your life in countless ways, big and small. It makes sense, then, that it should change the way we reflect on past events and prepare for the year ahead, too. Once upon a time, we'd stay up on December 31 and make a half-hearted promise to stop drinking, start batch cooking in earnest and start exercising (sometimes a generic 'Go to the gym', others a more specific 'Give rock climbing a whirl') as the clock struck midnight.

This time around, though, we've decided to make meaningful and achievable changes to the way we parent – and to help do just this, we've reached out to Irish experts and asked them to share their hard-earned words of wisdom.

With that in mind, here are the top seven parenting resolutions to introduce for 2025.

Set boundaries against unsolicited advice

"It's natural for loved ones to want to share advice but in those early days, it can sometimes feel overwhelming," says Katie Mugan, certified lactation consultant at Nursing Mama (nursingmama.ie).

"Setting gentle boundaries in advance can help – and remember that not all advice has to be followed. What works for others might not work for you.

"If comments are upsetting, try to let your loved ones know in a kind but clear way.

Trust your feeding choices

"Feeding decisions are often among the first you'll make as a new parent, and everyone seems to have an opinion. Make it a resolution to trust your own informed decision about how to feed your baby, whether that's breastfeeding, bottle-feeding or a combination," says Mugan.

"Surround yourself with supportive voices, even if they aren't from your family –it's your journey, and support from like-minded parents can be invaluable."

Practice digital detox before bed

"Create a tech-free hour before bed for the whole family. Create a location – I suggest a basket or box – in your kitchen where devices go by a certain time," says Erica Hargaden, child sleep consultant of Babogue (babogue.com). "This promotes better sleep quality and models healthy boundaries with devices for children.

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It's also a good idea to set a regular sleep schedule for yourself and your kids. Aim for consistent bedtimes to help everyone get enough rest, which can improve energy levels and mood," she adds.

"Couple this with a regular bedtime routine, and you will be on the road to less stressful and more peaceful nights."

Get out in daylight

"Make physical activity a family habit. Whether it's walking after dinner, dancing or playing outside, this helps everyone stay healthy and fosters connection," says Hargaden.

"Natural light exposure for 20 minutes in the morning, when possible, and 20 minutes in the late afternoon will help to regulate the entire family's body clock."

Trust your gut. Trust yourself

“As parents, we’re often inundated with advice from every direction. While it’s wonderful to gather tips, tricks and insights from fellow parents and experts, it’s crucial to remember the importance of trusting your own gut,” says Gemma Kingston, founder of The Family Edit (thefamilyedit.ie)

“Every family is unique, and what works for one may not work for another. It’s about finding your own rhythm and path in the vast world of parenting. Take the bits of advice that resonate with you and your family’s values and leave the rest. It’s OK to pick and choose.

“Your intuition as a parent is powerful – it’s honed by your love and understanding of your own children. Trust that. You know your child’s needs, interests and what makes them thrive better than anyone else,” she says.

“In the end, parenting isn’t about perfection.

It’s a journey of love, learning and growth for both you and your children. So, while it’s beneficial to stay open to new ideas and perspectives, always filter them through your own instincts and experiences.

“Your gut feeling is your compass in the beautiful, sometimes chaotic adventure of raising a family. Trust it.

Trust yourself.”

Make eye contact with your children

All our children really want from us is connection, which is why we should take five minutes to sit with them in the mornings as we drink our cups of tea, says Sheila O’Malley of Practical Parenting (practicalparenting.ie).

Start asking, ‘What if I give myself permission to…’

“This is the sentewnce that will change your self-care parenting guilt right through 2025 and beyond,” says perinatal emotional well-being practitioner Tara Whelan of Resilient Emotions (resilientemotions.ie).

“There is a cultural belief out there that to be a good parent we need to become self-sacrificing and put our own needs last. We often attach our own worth and value to how busy and productive we are at work and at home with our families.”

Whelan adds: “Limiting inner beliefs of rest can trigger the inner critic into telling you that you are ‘lazy’ if you decide to take your foot off the pedal and relax, keeping us stuck in a cycle of guilt, exhaustion and overwhelm. But here’s the thing: you can give yourself permission to meet your basic needs if you adopt a state of conscious choice and awareness.

“Pop ‘What if’ reminders wherever you need a trigger to meet your basic needs. Have something to eat or drink mindfully, rest, read a book, go for a 15-minute walk, phone a friend – whatever you need in that moment, without guilt, because you’re worth it.”