

Effective Discipline for School Age Children

Discipline is helping children get along with others, teaching children to behave, and helping children control their behavior.

The type of discipline a parent uses influences the type of person their child will become. Positive discipline techniques help children learn right from wrong. They build self-esteem and important life skills.

When children have a sense of control within themselves, they know what to do and when to do it, even when parents and caregivers are not around. A sense of self-control helps children feel safe and confident and enables them to think for themselves.

Try these positive discipline strategies to discover what works best for your family.

Make your rules clear and consistent.

Kids will test your limits. Often, kids forget what they are supposed to be doing, so be clear about your rules. Ask for their input on rules; they may cooperate better if they had a hand in making the rules.

State your rules positively. Make them "Do's" rather than "Don'ts". Make sure rules are appropriate for your child's age.

When a rule is broken, take away a privilege (video games, watching TV, etc.) or use a time-out. Be sure to be ready, willing, and able to follow up on the consequences or the rule will not be effective.

Speak Clearly

Speak in terms your child will understand and speak in a firm tone of voice. Example: instead of yelling "Clean up your room now!" tell you child clearly that



they need to hang up their clothes and put away their toys. Show your child that you respect and understand their feelings while standing firm on your expectations. Make sure your child is listening when you talk. Do not use too many words. Drop down to their level so you can speak eye-to-eye.

Praise Good Behavior

How often do you "catch" your children being good? Pay attention to the positive things your children do and reward their behavior with praise and affection. Children are eager to please. They want to do the "right" thing so they will be noticed by

those who are important to them. Most often, children misbehave to get attention – even if the attention they end up with is punishment.

Model Good Behavior

Teach your children how you want them to act. Model that behavior in your own life. Take time to talk to your children about why certain behaviors are wrong or unacceptable. Be a positive role model. Children are watching and learning from you all the time. If you expect to be treated with respect, treat your children with respect. If you say no yelling or hitting, then do not scream or spank.

Ask for help if you need it.

Being a parent is hard. Take advantage of resources in your school and your community to help tackle parenting challenges. Remember that discipline methods will need to change as you child ages.



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