

Positive Parenting Tips that Promote Good Behavior in Early Childhood

KEEP A SCHEDULE

Young children need a regular schedule. They behave better when they know what to expect. Try to have them eat, nap and play at the same times each day. When planning their daily schedule, include active time and quiet time; time playing together and time for children to play by themselves.

OFFER ENCOURAGEMENT

Encouraging words help your child build confidence. The key to encouraging your child is to be a coach more than a cheerleader. A cheerleader says: "What a great job!" or "What a beautiful picture!" A coach uses specific praise. For example, when your child sets the table, you might say, "You did such a good job setting the table! You put the spoons and forks in the right place and remembered the napkins!" When you look at a child's painting, you might say, "This painting just glows with color. You used blue, green, red, yellow and orange. Tell me how you did this!" Specific praise means a lot more to a child than a brief, "You are great."

Additional tips:

- ▶ Tell your child what they can DO instead of telling them DON'T
- ▶ Provide children with simple explanations for your rules or limits and offer alternatives
- ▶ Parents should work together so that children get a set of consistent limits. Whether parents are living together or apart, having the same rules is important to avoid confusing children.



FAST FIX

Change Your Approach

Instead of: "Don't leave your toy there."

Try: "Take your toy back to your room."

Instead of: "Don't touch anything."

Try: "We are just looking at these things."

Instead of: "Don't kick her."

Try: "Kicking hurts, use your words to tell her you are upset."

Use Simple Explanations and Alternatives

"It is 8:00 and time for bed; you may play with the markers tomorrow."

"You may not have popcorn now because it is dinnertime. You may have some Jell-O for dessert after you are finished with your dinner."

Practice Giving Choices*

Ask your children if they would like a banana or applesauce for their snack. Would they like to play with blocks or books?

*Avoid asking if your child is ready to go to bed, or if they would like to put on their jacket before going outside because it is cold. These activities are not optional.

