



Learning at Your Fingertips

Parenting 1.0



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Overview

The goal of parenting is to teach kids to develop self-discipline. Many parents feel spanking is necessary for effective discipline. When parents learn and apply the three Fs of Effective using the parenting techniques on this page and others, they find that yelling, screaming and spanking disappear and a positive relationship is established.



Guidelines for Parent Child Relationships

- Try to set a side time on a regular basis to do something fun with your child.
- Never disagree about discipline in front of the children.
- Never give an order, request, or command without being able to enforce it at the time.
- Be consistent, that is, reward or punish the same behavior in the same manner as much as possible.



Guidelines for Parent Child Relationships

- Agree on what behavior is desirable and not desirable.
- Agree on how to respond to undesirable behavior.
- Make it as clear as possible what the child is to expect if he or she performs the undesirable behavior.



Guidelines for Parent Child Relationships

- Make it very clear what the undesirable behavior is. It is not enough to say, “Your room is messy.” *Messy* should be specified in terms of exactly what is meant: “You’ve left dirty clothes on the floor, dirty plates on your desk, and your bed is not made.”
- Once you have stated your position and the child attacks that position, do not keep defending yourself. Just restate the position once more and then stop responding to the attacks.



Guidelines for Parent Child Relationships

- Look for gradual changes in behavior. Don't expect too much. Praise behavior that is coming closer to the desired goal.
- Remember that your behavior serves as a model for your children's behavior.
- If one of you is disciplining a child and the other enters the room, that other person should not step in on the argument in progress.



Guidelines for Parent Child Relationships

- Reward desirable behavior as much as possible by verbal praise, touch or something tangible such as a toy, food or money.
- Both of you should have an equal share in the responsibility of discipline as much as possible.



The “3 Fs” of Effective Parenting

Discipline should be:

- **Firm:** Consequences should be clearly stated and then adhered to when the inappropriate behavior occurs.
- **Fair:** The punishment should fit the crime. Also in the case of recurring behavior, consequences should be stated in advance so the child knows what to expect. Harsh punishment is not necessary. Using a simple Time Out can be effective when it is used consistently every time the behavior occurs. Also, use of reward for a period of time like part of a day or a whole day when no Time Outs or maybe only one Time Out is received.



The “3 Fs” of Effective Parenting

Discipline should be:

- **Friendly:** Use a friendly but firm communication style when letting a children know they have behaved inappropriately and let them know they will receive the “agreed upon” consequence. Encourage them to try to remember what they should do instead to avoid future consequences. Work at “catching them being good” and praise them for appropriate behavior.



The Parent as Teacher/Coach

See your role as that of a teacher or coach to your children. Demonstrate in detail how you would like them to behave. Have them practice the behavior. Give them encouragement along with constructive criticism.

- Try to set aside time on a regular basis to do something fun with your children.
- Rather than tell them what not to do, teach and show them what they should do.
- Use descriptive praise when they do something well. Say, “I like how you _____ when you _____.” Be specific.



The Parent as Teacher/Coach

- Help your child learn to express how he feels. Say: “You seem frustrated.” “How are you feeling?” “Are you up set?” “You look like you are angry about that.” “It’s O.K. to feel that way.”
- Try to see a situation the way your children do. Listen carefully to them. Try to form a mental picture of how it would look to them.
- Use a soft, confident tone of voice to redirect them when they are upset.



The Parent as Teacher/Coach

- Be a good listener: Use good eye contact. Physically get down to the level of smaller children. Don't interrupt. Ask open ended questions rather than questions that can be answered with a yes or no. Repeat back to them what you heard.
- Make sure they understand directions. Have them repeat them back.
- When possible give them choices of when and how to comply with a request.



The Parent as Teacher/Coach

- Look for gradual changes in behavior. Don't expect too much. Praise behavior that is coming closer to the desired goal.
- Develop a nonverbal sign (gesture) that your children will accept as a signal that they are being inappropriate and need to change their behavior. This helps them to respond to your prompt without getting upset.



The Use of Reward In Positive Parenting

When ever possible try to use reward and praise to motivate your child to improve their behavior.

For younger children you can use “grandma’s rule.” Say, “When you have picked up all your clothes, you may go out and play.” Be sure you use “when” rather than “if.”



The Use of Reward In Positive Parenting

Combine reward with time out for serious disruptive or defiant behaviors. Say, “Every time you _____, you will have a _____ time out. If you can go the whole (day, afternoon, etc.) without getting a time-out, you will earn _____..”



The First Time Club

If you are having trouble getting your child to do something when you ask, have him become a member of “The First Time Club.”

1. Make up a chart with 30 squares.
2. Tell the child that each time he does something the first time he is asked, a happy face will be placed in a square. When all the squares are completed, he will earn a reward.



The First Time Club

3. Mutually agree on the reward. For younger children, you can place a picture of the reward on the chart or for older children you can write it on the chart.
4. Then practice with the child how he is to behave. “Each time I ask you to do something, I want you to: (1) Use good eye contact, (2) Listen quietly, (3) Say OK I will _____. then (4) Do it.” Practice this, making a number of requests.
5. Then start the program.



The First Time Club

Be sure to praise him for each success during practice as well as when the program starts. By the time the squares are filled, he will have developed a new habit. When he completes the program, provide the reward immediately. Take the chart down and let him have it as part of the reward. Continue to use praise and encouragement to make sure this new habit remains and becomes even stronger.



Use of Time-Out

Time Out Time-out means time out from positive reinforcement (rewarding experiences). It is a procedure used to decrease undesirable behaviors. The main principle of this procedure is to ensure that the individual in time-out is not able to receive any reinforcement for a particular period of time.



Use of Time-Out

Time Out Area The time-out area should be easily accessible, and in such a location that the child can be easily monitored while in time-out. For example, if most activity takes place on the first floor of the house, the time-out area should not be on an upper floor. A chair in the corner of the dining room is an excellent spot. Placing a kitchen timer on the table is a good way to keep the child informed of how much time he has left to serve.



Use of Time-Out

Amount of Time Spent in Time Out Generally, it is considered more effective to have short periods of time-out, 5 to 10 minutes, rather than to have long periods, such as half an hour to an hour. Children can fairly quickly begin to use their imagination to turn a boring activity into an interesting one.



Use of Time-Out

Children from 2 – 5 years old should receive a 2 to 5 minute time-out. A 6 year old child should probably receive about a 5 minute time-out while a 10 year old child would receive a 10 minute time-out. A general guideline can be: 6-8 years of age, 5 minutes; 8-10 years of age, 10 minutes; 10-14 years of age, 10 to 20 minutes. Some double the time-out period for such offenses as hitting, severe temper tantrums, and destruction of property.



Use of Time-Out

Specifying Target Behaviors It is very important the child be aware of the behaviors that are targeted for reduction. They should be very concretely defined: for example, hitting means striking someone else's with the hand or an object, or coming home late means arriving home any time after 5:00 p.m.



Use of Time-Out

Procedures for Time Out

- When a child is told to go into time-out, a parent should only say, “Time-out for....” and state the particular offense. There should be no further discussion.
- Use a kitchen timer with a bell. Set the timer for the length of the time-out and tell the child he must stay in time-out until the bell rings.



Use of Time-Out

- While in time-out, the child should not be permitted to talk, and the parent should not communicate with the child in any way. The child also should not make noises in any way, such as mumbling or grumbling. He or she should not be allowed to play with any toy, to listen to the radio or stereo, watch television, or bang on the furniture. Any violation of time-out should result in automatic resetting of the clock for another time-out period.
- It is important that all members of the household be acquainted with the regulations for time-out, so that they will not interfere with the child in time-out in any way, for example, by turning on the radio.



Use of Time-Out

Strategies for Handling Refusal or Resistance

- While time-out works well, it can only work when the child actually serves the time out. There are a number of ways to handle refusal. None of them will work of all children. You may have to experiment to determine which one will work for your child.
- Tell younger children that you will count to three and if they are not in time-out when you get to three the time-out will be doubled.



Use of Time-Out

- Very difficult children, such as those with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder or Oppositional Defiant Disorder, may need to be placed on a short reward program. This could include a chart with 20 to 30 squares. Each time a child does a time-out, the child gets a star or sticker on the chart. When the chart is full they can earn a special treat for learning how to do time-out.
- Use response cost. Select an activity or object you can take away. Tell the child that until they do the time-out, they will not be able to use the object or engage in the activity. For instance, you can remove the cord from the TV and tell them that they may not watch TV or play a video game until they do the time-out.



Use of Time-Out

Alternatives to Time Out

Children 10 and over may decide they are “too big” for time-out because “it is for babies.”

Here are some other negative consequences that have been successful in reducing inappropriate behavior.



Use of Time-Out

Tell the child that each time he displays the inappropriate behavior, he will have to write sentences to remind him of how he should behave. For instance, every time you talk back you will have to write, " I will talk nicely and show respect to my parents."



Use of Time-Out

The first time this happens on a given day the sentence is written 5 times. If this does not help them remember then the next time the sentence is written 10 times. The number is increased by 5 or doubled (depending on the age of the child) each time the behavior occurs on that day. The next day the first occurrence receives 5 sentences.



Use of Time-Out

Remove privileges or objects that you can control. Make a list of privileges or objects (TV, ride bike, stay up late, go outside and play, etc.). Tell the child that each time the undesirable behavior occurs, one item will be crossed of the list for that day. Each day the procedure starts over.



Use of Time-Out

Advantages of Time Out

- It is less aversive than other procedures, such as physical punishment.
- It eliminates a lot of yelling and screaming on the part of the parents.
- It increases the probability that parents are going to be consistent about what is going to be punished, when and how.



Use of Time-Out

- The child learns to accept his own responsibility for undesirable behavior. The parents are not punishing the child; rather the child is punishing himself. The child should be repeatedly told that the parents did not put him or her in time-out but that the child put himself in time-out.
- The child more readily learns to discriminate which behaviors are acceptable and which are unacceptable.



Use of Time-Out

- The child begins to learn more self-control.
- By keeping a written record of time-outs parents can see if the procedure is reducing the targeted behavior. Also, reward can be tied to only receiving a certain amount of time-outs in a day or a smaller time period.



Summary

Whether or not your child behaves appropriately can depend on a number of factors and even the best-behaved child can have an off day if they're bored, tired, ill or upset. Helping her build a solid framework of good behavior is simpler than you might think and something that will benefit them for the rest of his or her life.

