

Positive Discipline, Not Punishment

Hints for positive discipline:

- Understanding your child's behavior is important. For example, most children can't sit still for a long time, most are normally active and clumsy. Such behaviors are to be expected
- Some children have problems like bedwetting after age 5. It's not their fault. If they could control this, they would. Discuss such problems with your child's doctor or nurse
- Know your child's triggers, such as when they're told "no" or ending an activity they enjoy
- Avoid expecting too much when your child is tired, hungry or grumpy
- Correct bad behaviors when they happen. But, if you're very upset, make sure your child is safe and take a time out to cool-off before going back to your child
- Most "difficult" behaviors are minor and not dangerous, destructive or hurtful; try ignoring them. Prioritize tackling behaviors that are dangerous, destructive or hurtful
- It's important to tell and show your child how to behave; you teach by being a good role model
- Be patient – young children are learning how to express and control their emotions
- Reward and praise good behaviors you want to encourage
- Show and tell your kids you love them, like giving hugs and saying you're proud of them
- Spend quality time with your child doing activities they enjoy – without using your phone!



Positive discipline is necessary.

It takes self-control, patience and time!

It's a way to teach your child how to behave well.

Being a parent can be hard. We all want kids to learn to behave.

Kids learn to manage feelings and disappointments when discipline is clear and consistent.

If you'd like help with discipline, please talk to your child's nurse or doctor.

More hints for positive discipline

- Decide which behaviors are OK or not OK
- Decide how you'll reward good behavior, and let child know, in advance
- Decide what will be the consequences of bad behavior, and let child know, in advance
- Keep rules clear and simple - based on your child's age and development
- Be sure to convey that you disapprove of the behavior, not that the child is "bad"
- Be consistent – all caregivers should follow the same approach; if not, it's confusing to young children
- Positive discipline works better than physical punishment. Physical punishment can hurt children's health, development and safety; it may create more fear than respect for parents; it does not encourage thinking about what was done wrong and how to behave. Remember, you're your child's best teacher!



Helpful Resources

The National Parent Helpline | www.nationalparenthelpline.org

Call **1-855-427-2736** for English and Spanish, Monday – Friday, 10am to 7pm PST

The Helpline is for parents and caregivers. A trained advocate will:

- Listen to you
- Help you problem-solve
- Help you take care of yourself
- Help connect you to local services
- Help you build on your own strengths and be a great parent

If you're interested in learning about discipline:

- **"1-2-3 Magic: Effective Discipline for Children Ages 2-12"** by Thomas Payton; Child Management, 1996.
- **"How to Talk so Kids Will Listen, How to Listen so Kids Will Talk"** by Faber and Mazlish; First Avon Books, 1999.
- Learn how to "Organize your home for your child" for your child:
 - www.cdc.gov/parents/essentials/structure/building.html (English)
 - www.cdc.gov/parents/spanish/essentials/structure/buildingblocks.html (Spanish)