

PARENTING 101:

10 Ways to Practice Positive Discipline to Your Child



1. UNDERSTAND THE MEANING BEHIND THE BEHAVIOUR.



The most important thing is to realize that whatever a child does, we may label as bad, but really the child is doing the best he can. It's our job as parents to find out why he is doing it. Once we know the valid root of the behavior, we can easily remove the cause or heal the emotions, and the child won't be driven to behave in that way anymore.

2. INSTEAD OF POINTING OUT WHAT THE CHILD DID WRONG, SHOW THE CHILD HOW TO SET THINGS RIGHT.

Instead of saying "Don't hit" or "NO hitting" try saying "Use your words" or "Ask nicely". When you say "Don't hit" it does not give the child any information of what she should be doing instead. Without that knowledge, she may just end up going with her original plan to hit or she may choose to go with some other option which is equally bad - Like shoving the other kid.



3. FOCUS ON CONTROLLING YOURSELF - NOT YOUR CHILD.



It's hard to keep cool in the heat of the moment, but parents need to model the types of behavior they want their children to emulate. Remember, yelling begets yelling, hitting begets hitting. We should not do anything in front of our children that we don't want them to do.

4. BE KIND BUT FIRM; SHOW EMPATHY AND RESPECT.

It can be very frustrating when your child insists on some wrong behavior as being right. As parents, instead of arguing back, we just need to stay calm and repeat what we said in a kind manner but very firmly. For instance, repeat "Hitting hurts, we do not hit our friends" and "Yes, sharing is good, but we do not hit someone even if they don't share".



5. BE CONSISTENT WITH YOUR EXPECTATION.



Parents often overlook a certain behavior in the hope that it will pass. But guess what? It doesn't pass. If your child bites another child, for instance, you should hold her arm and tell her that the behavior is not acceptable. If she continues, then it is time to remove her from the situation. Sometimes a child might try to test the limits by arguing with the rules.

6. WHENEVER POSSIBLE, OFFER CHOICES

After offering empathy, you can take it to the next level by offering her some choices. Choices give your child a sense of control. Simple choices like, "That was not nice, do you want to make your playmate feel better by giving her a hug or by saying you are sorry?" or "Do you want to say sorry and continue playing with her?" Remember to pick your choices carefully though, because once a choice is offered, and your child picks one, you need to honor it.



7. GIVE ATTENTION TO THE BEHAVIOR YOU LIKE - NOT THE BEHAVIOR YOU DON'T.



Children often act up because they want your attention, so sometimes it pays to ignore those actions you don't want to see more of. Tantrums and whining? Play deaf or walk away, and your child will quickly learn that there's a better way to communicate.

8. TREAT MISTAKES AS OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN.

A child will often act out because she perceives it as the means to get to an end. When you use bad behavior as an opportunity to teach them not only that what they did is wrong but also empower them with alternatives, it will help them in the future from using it as a tool even when you are not around. Try not to launch into a lecture though.



9. CHANGE THE SCENE - PREVENT THE MISBEHAVIOR FROM BEING REPEATED.

Prevention is better than cure. That phrase is cliched, for a reason. If you are dealing with recurrent misbehavior, look at what you can do to prevent it in the first place. It's easy to call your child stubborn and try to discipline her for it, but if you get to the root cause of why she sometimes behaves the way she does, you will see that there is a really sweet little child hidden in there.



10. DON'T OFFER BRIBE.



It may be tempting to offer your child a cookie for behaving well during an outing, but offering a child a reward sends the wrong message; what kids hear is "You don't want to be very good and you have to be paid off". The best reward for a kid is time with the parents. Quality time is key to a happy, well-behaved child.

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