



DO'S AND DON'TS OF EFFECTIVE PARENTING

Dos

Don'ts

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| <p><u>Sit down with your spouse</u></p> <p>Planning your approach will help you be more consistent, because you won't be trying to figure out what to do in the heat of the moment.</p> | <p><u>Give up too soon</u></p> <p>Bad behaviour requires a minimum of 21 days to reform. Use a calendar to keep track of how often incidents occur so you can spot gradual improvement.</p> |
| <p><u>Explain the how-tos.</u></p> <p>A child doesn't instinctively know how to act appropriately. You have to teach him. Punishing your child for what he did wrong, instead of instructing him how to do it right, creates anger and resentment that can lead to further misbehaviour.</p> | <p><u>Give a lecture</u></p> <p>In six words or less, tell your child exactly what you want her to do: "Please take the ball outside" or "Put your bowl in the sink." Stop phrasing instructions as questions. Instead of asking, "Are you ready to go?" command firmly, "It's time to go. Goodbye." You have to state-not negotiate-the rules.</p> |
| <p><u>Look below the surface</u></p> <p>When your child throws a toy or screams, "I hate you!" figure out what he's really upset about. If he's angry about having to put away a puzzle, explain, "Honey, your ride will be here any minute. You can work on it some other time when you get home from school."</p> | <p><u>Get into a debate</u></p> <p>Resist your child's attempt to engage in a dialogue. Send the child into his room to settle down and think. This gives him a chance to deal with the reality that he's not going to get what he wants, and keeps you from losing your cool.</p> |
| <p><u>Say the three magic words</u></p> <p>When your child refuses to do as asked, remind him what the consequences will be if he continues down that road. Then matter-of-factly deliver this phrase: "It's your choice"</p> | <p><u>Cave when she cries</u></p> <p>Backing off from punishment because your child is upset undoes the lesson you're trying to teach. "If your child has done something bad, she should feel bad". That's what will help prevent her from doing it again. E.g. lose video-game privileges, no matter how much they complain. You may hate feeling the meanest Mother in the world, but it's short-term pain for long-term gain.</p> |

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| <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Give him a heads-up</u></p> <p>Let your child know what you expect of him before he's in a situation that could easily deteriorate. Kids appreciate knowing what you expect of them before they step over the line or are too emotionally tied up in a situation to stop them.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Be afraid to raise the stakes</u></p> <p>If a two minute time-out or a ban on TV for the day doesn't improve matters, double the sentence or come up with a more effective alternative. Think of a chore your child hates to do, such as sweeping the garage and make that the penalty for hitting. Or take away a favourite activity, such as riding a scooter. It may sound harsh, but the consequences must be strong to be effective.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Get her to agree</u></p> <p>The next time you ask your daughter to turn off the computer, make sure she replies "Okay, Mom." A child is a lot more likely to do what you ask when he or she agrees to your requests.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Scream</u></p> <p>Yelling will simply make a child tune out. If you really want him to listen, lower your voice, kneel down so that he's at your eye level and speak in a near whisper.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Evaluate your responses</u></p> <p>If your punishments aren't working, examine how you might be inadvertently reinforcing your child's misbehaviour.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Miss the warning signs</u></p> <p>Whether it's pursing their lips, making a fist, or getting "that look in their eyes," children tend to react the same way whenever they are about to lash out. Learn to pick on your child's visual clues, point out what he's doing, and suggest a substitute behaviour that forces him to think before he acts. Say "I see you are kicking your feet. You must be angry. Why don't you do some jumping jacks?"</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Build on small successes</u></p> <p>Notice the strides that your child is making toward better behaviour, and let her know she is on the right track. Say, "Wow, you put the beads away without my asking!" or "Thanks for staying near the shopping cart in the super market." A few encouraging words will motivate your child to keep working on her poor habits.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Correct every little mistake</u></p> <p>Constantly confronting your children is likely to frustrate them, not improve their behaviour. Sometimes it is ok to let kids figure out what they need to do on their own. During a recent vacation, one child disobeyed and took her stuffed dog out even after her father had told her not to. She was heartbroken when she lost it, but she learned a valuable lesson about the importance of taking care of her things.</p> |