

Topic of the Month

Guiding your child's Behaviour- Positive discipline

Disciplining your child is one of the most important things you will do as a parent, it's also one of the hardest things you will have to do. Here are some positive ways to discipline your child.

Positive discipline guides and teaches children, it helps your children to be a caring and happy person whom encompass:

- Self-esteem (feeling good about oneself in their own skin)
- Respect for others
- Problem solving skills
- Self-regulation



There are many ways to positively discipline your child it can depend on age, developmental stage, personality and many other factors. You as the parent or care giver you will know what works best for your child(ren) and your family.

Setting the stage for good behaviour

As a parent or caregiver, you need to think outside the box with your children. Make sure you discipline your child with respect, which is consistent and fair, disciplining this way will have longer lasting effects. Good behaviour isn't just luck, there is a lot you can do to nurture it's also helpful to understand what affects your child's behaviour.

External Factors (Things that the families have some control over)

Physical space: A comfortable, calm, well organized space will foster good behaviour.

Materials: Toys that match your child's developmental age will engage and excite them. Most often the more simple the better.

Sleep: Naps are very important for younger children and are beneficial to be a part of the family's routine. Keep nap times consistent, at the same time each day and make sure your child is getting enough sleep during the night.

Food: Hungry children can get cranky .Try and keep regular meal times and healthy snacks between meals.

Peers: Your child's peers can affect your child's behaviour, try and get to know your child's friends. When your child has friends over explain the house rules to everyone and expect the same respectful, cooperative behaviour from everyone.

Screens: Try to limit your child's screen time. While some quality children's shows may promote positive behaviour, violent less educational show and video games can provoke anxiety and aggressive behavior in some children.

Internal factor (things families have no control over)

Your child is unique, they have their own temperament (their own personality and styles of behaviour). This can affect how he/she reacts to events and different situations in their own world. You can support your child in a positive way by:

- Respecting your child's thoughts and feelings
- Being honest and open with your child
- Listening to your child when they are expressing themselves
- Respecting your child's ideas and contributions to different situations



Age	Typical Behaviour	What Parents/caregivers can do
Infant Under 1 year of age	Cries to make their needs known Busy getting into things Learns by their senses (sight, smell, sound, taste touch)	Support your baby to learn self- sooth (comfort your baby when they are sick, hurt or upset) don't ignore your child during these times. Say no when your child is doing something you don't want them to be doing. Your child might be overexcited and need to be calmed down.
Young Toddler 1-2 Years	Your child will start to test limits and explore their independence Fearful from leaving their parent or caregiver Learning to say "no"	Create a safe environment that your child can explore and learn in. Give your child positive attention when they are doing something good. Use redirection from things that you don't want them to do or could be dangerous. Help calm them down when they need it.
Older Toddler 2-3 Years	Becoming more independent Frustrated when you set limits and may show it by acting out. May become possessive of their toys or items that are theirs (doesn't understand mine-versus someone else's) Easily distracted	Some frustration is good, it helps your child learn to problem solve. Give choices when you can Explain to your child why the behaviour is unacceptable
Preschooler 3-5 years	More accepting of limits, but won't make the right decision every time. Likes to feel important Can follow simple instructions Can make their own choices Independent May tell on peers when doing something they shouldn't be doing	Will need clear and consistent rules Be a role model- set an example by your own actions. Make sure the consequence matches the unwanted behaviour. Approval and positive encouragement will inspire your child to do good things. Long lectures and instructions will not work and cause frustration.

There are many things you can do as a parent or caregiver to promote positive behaviour in your child:

Spend positive time alone with your child each day, this will make them feel important and heard.

Try to be as comforting as possible, give you child plenty of hugs, cuddles and kisses.

If your child is upset, frustrated or sad respect their feelings. Let them know that it is okay to feel that way. Talk to them about how their bodies are feeling and how it makes them feel.

Stay consistent, if you make a promise try your best to follow through. It is important that your child trust you, they will also want you to trust them.

Don't sweat the small stuff, ask yourself "Is this important?" before you raise your voice.

Sources:

https://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/guiding_with_positive_discipline

<https://www.universalclass.com/articles/self-help/effectively-guiding-behavior-in-positive-parenting.htm>

