

Avoid Pampering



Parents make a mistake when they pamper in the name of love.

- 1) Pampering creates weakness because children develop the belief that others should do everything for them.
- 2) One of the greatest gifts you can give your children is to allow them to develop the belief, "I am capable."
- 3) Children feel capable when they learn that they can survive the ups and downs of life.

Agreements



- 1) Have a discussion where each person gets to voice feelings and thoughts on an issue.
- 2) Brainstorm solutions and choose one everyone can agree to.
- 3) Agree on a specific time deadline.
- 4) If agreement is not followed avoid judgment and criticism. Use nonverbal signals or ask, "What was our agreement?"
- 5) If agreement still is not followed, start again at step 1.

Quoted from the Positive Discipline books © Jane Nelsen and Lynn Lott

Anger Wheel of Choice



- 1) Teach your children that feelings are always okay, but what they do is not always okay.
- 2) During a time when your child is feeling calm, show him or her the Anger Wheel of Choice and go over the respectful alternatives for expressing anger.
- 3) When your child is angry, validate feelings and then offer a choice, "What would help you now—some positive time-out or the wheel of choice?"

Break the Code



Closet Listening



- 1) During the week take time to sit quietly near your kids.
- 2) If they ask what you want, say "I just wanted to hang out with you for a few minutes."
- 3) If they talk, just listen without judging, defending, or explaining.

Compliments



**Compliments and appreciations
bring us closer together.**

Focus on accomplishments and helpfulness
to others:

- 1) "I appreciate how quickly you get dressed and ready for school."
- 2) "I notice how kindly you cared for Anna when she felt sad, I bet it helped her feel better."
- 3) "Thank you for setting the table."

Quotes from the Positive Discipline books © Jane Nelsen and Lynn Lott

Connection Before Correction



Create closeness and trust instead of distance and hostility by making sure the message of love gets through.

"I love you and the answer is, no"

"You are more important to me than your grades. What do your grades mean to you?"

"I love you and have faith that we can find a respectful solution."

Control Your Behavior



Example is the best teacher.

- 1) Do you expect your children to control their behavior when you don't control your own?
- 2) Create your own special time-out area and let your children know when you need to use it.
- 3) If you can't leave the scene, count to 10 or take deep breaths.
- 4) When you make mistakes, apologize to your children.

Curiosity Questions



Asking instead of telling invites children to think and choose.

- 1) "What do you need to do to be ready for school on time?"
- 2) "Oops! What do you need to do about the spilled milk?"
- 3) "How can you and your brother solve this problem?"
- 4) "What do you need to take if you don't want to be cold outside?"
- 5) "What is your plan for getting your homework done?"

Decide What You Will Do



Decide what you will do, instead of engaging in power struggles.

1) Plan what you will do and notify in advance:

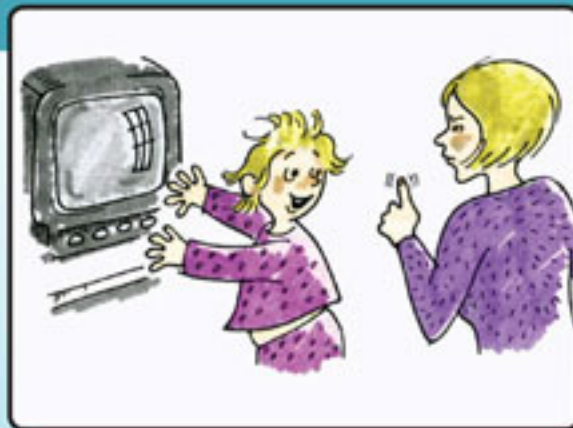
“When the table is set I will serve dinner.”

“I will help with homework on Tuesday and Thursday, but not last minute”

“When chores are done I will drive you to your friend’s house.”

2) Follow through on your plan with kindness and firmness.

Distract & Redirect



Instead of saying,
“Don’t,” redirect to a “Do.”

- 1) Remove your child from the TV knobs and redirect by saying, “You can play with the blocks.”
- 2) Distract by becoming the tickle monster.
- 3) Take your child by the hand and lead him or her to another activity.
- 4) Give your child a timer so he or she can tell you when it is time to leave the park.

Encouragement



“A child needs encouragement like a plant needs water.” – Rudolf Dreikurs

- 1) A misbehaving child is a discouraged child. When children feel encouraged, misbehavior disappears.
- 2) Encourage by creating a connection before correction.
- 3) Every suggestion in this deck of Positive Discipline Tool Cards is designed to help children feel encouraged and to develop valuable social and life skills that will help them feel capable.

Encouragement vs. Praise



Teach self-reliance instead of dependence on others.

Encouragement invites self-evaluation.

Praise invites children to become "approval junkies."

Examples:

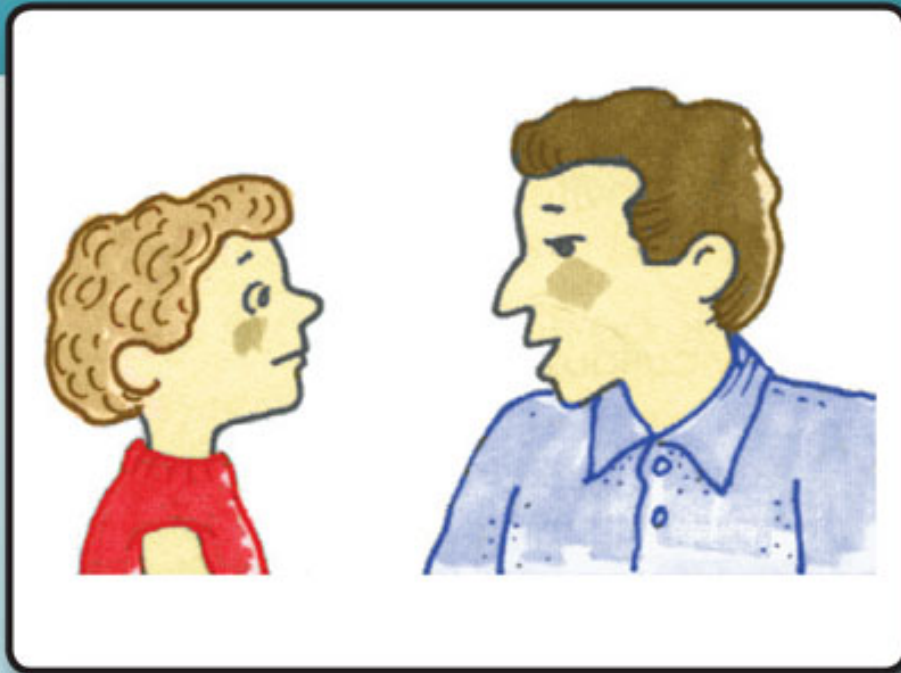
Praise: "I am so proud of you. Here is your reward."

Encouragement: "You worked hard. You must be so proud of yourself."

Praise: "You are such a good girl."

Encouragement: "Thanks for helping."

Eye to Eye



It isn't respectful (and doesn't work) to sit on the couch and yell at your child from across the room?

- 1) Stop whatever you are doing. Get up and get close enough to your child to see his or her eyes.
- 2) You'll notice that you speak more softly when you make the respectful effort to see your child's eyes.

Focus On Solutions



**Instead of focusing on blame,
focus on solutions.**

- 1) Identify a problem.
- 2) Brainstorm for as many solutions as possible.
- 3) Pick one that works for everyone.
- 4) Try the solution for a week.
- 5) In a week, evaluate. If it didn't work start over.

Follow Through



**If you say it, mean it,
and if you mean it, follow through.**

Kids know when you mean it and when you don't.

If you say: "I will read a story at 8:00 after pajamas are on and teeth are brushed," and your kids aren't ready by 8:00; **kindly** point out the time and put the kids to bed without reading.

Be encouraging by saying, "You can try again tomorrow."

Jobs



Children learn life skills, develop social interest and feel capable by helping out at home.

- 1) Brainstorm a family job list together.
- 2) Create fun ways to rotate jobs, such as a job wheel with a spinner, job charts, or a job jar for “fishing” out two chores for the week.
- 3) Take time for job training—do chores with them the first six years.
- 4) Discuss all problems at a family meeting and focus on solutions.

Kind AND Firm



It is the AND that brings kind AND firm together to avoid extremes.

Begin by validating feelings and/or showing understanding. Offer a choice when possible. Examples:

- 1) I know you don't want to brush your teeth, AND we can do it together.
- 2) You want to keep playing, AND it is time for bed. Do you want one story or two?
- 3) I love you, AND the answer is, "No."

Letting Go



Letting go does not mean abandoning your child. It means allowing your child to learn responsibility and to feel capable.

- 1) Take small steps in letting go.
- 2) Take time for training and then step back.
- 3) Have faith in your child to learn from his or her mistakes.
- 4) Get a life so your identity doesn't depend on managing your child's life.

Limited Choices



**Choices provide small steps
in shared power.**

- 1) It is time to leave. Would you like to hop like a bunny or clomp like an elephant to the car?
- 2) If your child doesn't want to leave, kindly and firmly say: "Staying is not a choice," and repeat the two choices.
- 3) It can be empowering to add, "You decide," after giving two choices.

Limit Screen Time



Screen time is addictive and interferes with relationships.

- 1) For young children, be careful about using the TV as a babysitter.
- 2) Do not allow computers or TVs or cell phones in children's rooms.
- 3) Make agreements with children about how much TV, video games, texting and internet time is reasonable.
- 4) Brainstorm fun alternative activities, that bring family members together.

Listen



Children will listen to you AFTER they feel listened to.

- 1) Notice how often you interrupt, explain, defend your position, lecture, or give a command when your child tries to talk to you.
- 2) Stop and just listen. It is okay to ask questions such as, "Can you give me an example? Is there anything else?"
- 3) When your child is finished, ask if he or she is willing to hear you.
- 4) After sharing, focus on a solution that works for both.

Logical Consequences



1. Related
2. Respectful
3. Reasonable
4. Helpful

Natural Consequences



Children develop resiliency and capability by experiencing the natural consequences of their choices.

- 1) **Avoid lectures** or, "I told you so."
- 2) **Show empathy:** "You're soaking wet, that must be uncomfortable."
- 3) **Be comforting without rescuing:** "A warm shower might help."
- 4) **Validate feelings:** "Sounds like that was very embarrassing."

One Word



**Avoid lecturing and nagging.
Use one word as a kind reminder.**

- 1) "Towel." (for the towel left on the floor)
- 2) "Dog." (when the dog has not been fed)
- 3) "Dishes."
- 4) "Bedtime."
- 5) When agreements are made together in advance, one word is often all that needs to be said.

Pay Attention



Are your children getting the impression that they are not important?

- 1) Put down whatever you are doing and focus on your child as though he or she is more important than anything else you could do.
- 2) Don't forget to schedule special time. (See the Special Time card.)
- 3) Remember what Toni Morrison said: "Do your eyes light up when they walk into the room?"

Put Kids In The Same Boat



Instead of taking sides when children fight, treat them the same.

- 1) **Give the same choice:** "Kids, would you like to go to the peace table or the wheel of choice?"
- 2) **Show Faith:** "Let me know when you have identified the problem and have ideas for solutions."
- 3) **Leave:** Fighting will diminish significantly when you stop taking sides-so long as you are having regular family meetings to teach problem-solving skills.

Routines



Help children create routine charts to encourage self-discipline.

- 1) Create routine charts WITH your child
- 2) Brainstorm tasks that need to be done (bedtime, morning, homework, etc.)
- 3) Take pictures of child doing each task.
- 4) Let the routine chart be the boss: "What is next on your routine chart?"
- 5) Do not take away from feelings of capability by adding rewards.

Sense of Humor



Humor can help parents and children lighten up.

- 1) Remember to laugh and have fun.
- 2) "Here comes the tickle monster to get kids who don't pick up toys."
- 3) When kids are fighting, gently tackle them and say, "Pig Pile."
- 4) Be sensitive to times when humor is not appropriate.

Show Faith



When we show faith in our children they develop courage and faith in themselves.

- 1) Instead of rescuing, lecturing, or fixing, say, "I have faith in you to handle this."
- 2) Children develop their problem-solving skills and disappointment muscles through experiences.
- 3) Validate feelings: "I know you are upset. I would be too. And, I have faith in you."

Silent Signals



Parents often talk too much. A silent signal could speak louder than words.

- 1) Smile and point to the shoes that need to be picked up.
- 2) Decide with your child on signals that would work better than words during a conflict or as a reminder of manners.
- 3) When you feel upset, try putting your hand on your heart to signal, "I love you." You'll both feel better.

Small Steps

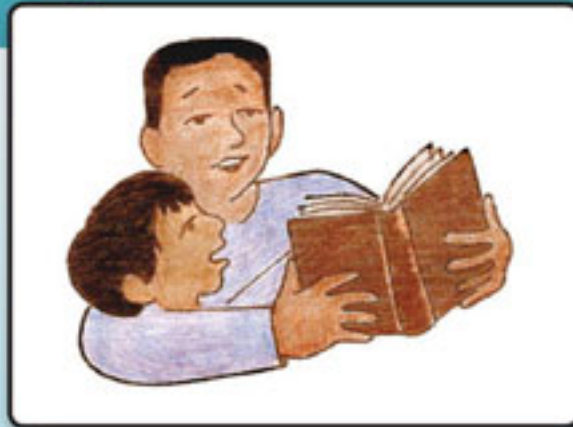


Break tasks down to allow children to experience success.

Example – A preschooler struggles to write his or her name:

- 1) Model correct pencil grip.
- 2) Work on one letter at a time. You do one and then let your child do one.
- 3) Teach the skill but don't do the work for him or her.
- 4) Children give up the belief that they can't when they achieve small steps.

Special Time



Schedule special time that is different from regular time.

- 1) Take the phone off the hook.
- 2) Take turns choosing an activity you both enjoy from a list you have brainstormed together.
- 3) **Age Guidelines:**
 - 2-6 years old: 10 min./day.
 - 7-12: at least 30 min./ week.
 - 13 and older: once a month something your teen can't resist.

Take Time for Training



Training is an important part of teaching children life skills.

Don't expect children to know what to do without step-by-step training. What do you mean by clean?

- 1) Kindly explain the task as you perform it, while your child watches.
- 2) Do the task together.
- 3) Have your child do it by herself while you supervise.
- 4) When she feels ready let her perform the task on her own.

Teach Children What to Do



Instead of telling young children what **NOT** to do, teach them what they **CAN** do.

- 1) Instead of, "Don't hit," teach, "Touch nicely," and demonstrate.
- 2) After teaching, remind by asking, "How do you touch nicely?"
- 3) Teach about throwing the ball outside. Then remind by asking, "Where do you throw the ball?"
- 4) Instead of, "Don't touch the lamp," say, "You can play with the pans."

Validate Feelings



- 1) Allow children to have their feelings so they can learn they are capable of dealing with them.
- 2) Don't fix, rescue, or try to talk children out of their feelings.
- 3) Validate their feelings: "I can see you are really (angry, upset, sad)."
- 4) Then keep your mouth shut and have faith in your children to work it through.