Parenting Tips
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Positive Attention & Special Time
Creating a Structured Environment: Establishing “House Rules” and Developing Consistent Routines
Time Out
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Parent/Caregiver Self-Care
Positive Attention & Special Time

- Kids thrive on spending quality time with caregivers.
- Find a time daily to spend 20 mins. playing with your child
- Arrange other activities or care for siblings
- Allow child to choose activity or join their play, but the activity should be interactive.
- Do **not** try to control the activity
- Relax: watch child play and join in when appropriate
Describe out loud what your child is doing. It shows you are interested. Make your narration exciting and action-oriented.

Do not ask questions or give commands or try to teach. This is your child’s time to relax.

Occasionally make positive statements such as “I like when you play quietly like this.”

Ignore minor misbehavior, but stop play and leave the room if it continues. Explain that you can finish the play later when the child is well-behaved.
Summary: Special Time

- Set aside 20 mins. 5 times a week the first week and 3 times a week thereafter
- Make good eye contact & speak enthusiastically
- Be specific about behaviors you like
- Praise immediately after desired behavior
- Be genuine and notice small improvements in behavior
- Give more positive attention than corrective feedback (3:1 ratio)
- Give attention your child enjoys
Creating a Structured Environment

- Kids thrive on routine and structure.
- Having consistent rules, routines, and expectations helps children to know what to expect.
- When your behavioral expectations are clearly defined, children’s compliance should improve.
Establishing “House Rules”

- Create a list of no more than 10 “house rules”
- Rules should be clear and specific
- Examples:
  - No physical fights between siblings
  - All homework must be complete before dinner
  - No disrespectful talk to siblings or parents
  - Must be in bed with lights out by 8:30 am
- List should be posted somewhere such as refrigerator door
- Draw pictures for children who cannot read yet
- Review list with children once it is created
“House Rules”

- You decide the consequences when rules are broken.
- Decide consequences in advance, to help provide consistent consequences across time and caregivers.
- Implement consequence immediately after rule is broken.
- You don’t need to provide warnings in advance as children already know the rules that you have reviewed.
Routines help make life predictable for kids. Routines can help during parts of the day when kids have difficulty (e.g., afterschool or prior to bed).

First step: identify types of routines that will be helpful.

Next step: List various tasks in order that need to be accomplished.

Identify time frame for each task

Keep routines simple & reasonable!
Consistent Routines

- Once routine is established, the steps and consequences for compliance and noncompliance should be listed and displayed for children.
- One option is to list the routine on an index card the child can carry or display on their wall.
- Consider how you will monitor completion of routine.
- Decide how to enforce the routine
- Identify consequences for not completing the routine
- Also identify positive consequences for completing the routine
Get home from school: 3:00
After school snack & break: 3:00–3:30
Language arts homework: 3:30–4:00
Break: 4:00–4:15
Math and science homework: 4:15–4:45
Break: 4:45–5:00
Independent reading: 5:00–5:20
Free time until dinner: 5:20–6:30
**Time out (TO): What it is?**

- Technique to reduce inappropriate behaviors that occur on a frequent basis (e.g., hitting, spitting, cursing, etc.)
- TO from attention
- For specific amount of time, child sits by himself and does not receive any attention
- Appropriate for ages 2–8
- Length of TO is equal to 1 min per child’s age.
  - Example: Age 5 = 5 mins of TO
How to prepare for TO

- **Identify TO chair**
  - Preferably one that does not swivel, move, or recline; kitchen chair is best

- **Establish consistent TO location**
  - Should be a boring place where the child can be monitored
  - Hallways, staircases, laundry rooms, bathrooms are best
  - Not the child’s bedroom due to many toys and enjoyable activities; if you need to use a bedroom, try a guest room
  - Put TO chair in the TO location
Implementing TO

- As soon as behavior occurs, stop what you are doing and say “There is no hitting, go to TO.”
- If child does not go, take him there.
- Ignore anything child says on way to TO or while in time out
- Do not talk to your child during TO!
- Child must sit in TO chair and remain there until the end of TO.
- Set a timer for the length of the TO
- If child leaves TO, return him to the chair and the timer is reset and the time starts over.
Implementing TO cont.

- After the timer rings, ask child to tell you the reason he was put in TO.
- If he can’t explain, remind him of the reason.
- After TO is over, look for positive behaviors you can give attention to.
- By paying attention to positive behaviors, the child learns he gets your attention for engaging in appropriate behaviors.
- Be sure to explain TO before the first time it is used.
1–2–3 Magic

- Used by teachers at BBES
- Can also be used at home
- System to help parents define and model behavior expectations, reward appropriate behavior, and respond to problem behavior.
- For additional info, talk to your child’s teacher or visit the following website: www.123magic.com
- Offers a free parenting newsletter: http://www.123magic.com/newsletters
TO in public areas

- TO can be used in public
- TO can be used on a park bench, on the floor of a grocery store, or in a stopped car.
- It requires creativity, but can still be effective.
- The best plan is to be consistent across settings, so that children understand that they need to engage in appropriate behavior no matter where they are.
Effective Instructions

- How you give instructions is very important.
- You can give instructions in a way that will increase the likelihood that your child will comply.
Guidelines: Before giving an instruction

- Obtain your child’s attention by (1) establishing eye contact; (2) stating the child’s name; (3) placing your hand on the child’s shoulder; (4) placing your self close to your child’s location; and (5) eliminating distractions
- Phrase instruction as statement rather than question
- Issue *one* instruction at a time; wait for your child to complete the request before giving another
Issue instructions that are clear and specific. Avoid vague requests such as “stop that,” “clean up,” and “get ready to go.”

Don’t say “we” unless you plan to help the child complete a task.

Use a firm tone of voice, but you don’t need to yell.

Ask the child to repeat the instruction to ensure their understanding.

Praise/encourage/thank your child when he obeys. The positive attention will motivate him to continue the desired behavior.
When your child does not obey

- Repeat instruction with a warning of a negative consequence that will follow if the child does not comply.
- If child complies after you repeat instruction, praise, encourage, thank child.
- If child still has not complied, implement consequence.
- Using this method of issuing instructions, should minimize repeating instructions and make it less likely that you issue empty threats for noncompliance.
Rewards Children Like

- Nonverbal Signs of Approval (gestures)
- Verbal Signs of Approval (verbal praise)
- Activity Rewards
- Material Rewards
Nonverbal Signs of Approval (Gestures)

- Hugs
- Pat on the back or shoulder
- High-five
- Affectionate rubbing of hair
- Placing arm around child
- Smiling
- Kisses
- Thumbs-up
- Winking
Verbal Signs of Approval (Verbal Praise)

- I like it when you...
- It’s nice when you...
- That was terrific the way you...
- Wait until I tell Mom/Dad how nicely you...
- What a nice thing to do...
- You did that all by yourself...way to go!
- I am very proud of you when you...
- You sure are a big boy/girl for...
- Great job!
- Terrific!
- Super!
Activity Rewards

- Playing cards/board games/videogames with parent
- Going to the park
- Reading a story
- Baking cookies
- Extra TV or computer time
- Having a friend over
- Staying up an extra half hour after bedtime
- Family game/movie night
- Visit to a museum, zoo, aquarium, etc.
Material Rewards

- Ice cream/special food
- Coins
- Stickers
- Baseball cards
- Dollar Store toys
- Toy/treasure chest stocked with various inexpensive rewards
- Any small toy your child really likes
- Remember: expensive material rewards need to be earned for an extended period of appropriate behavior (e.g., a few weeks or a month)
Of all of the skills, this is the most important! You need to take care of yourself in order to be able to take care of your child/children.

Types of Self-Care
- Physical
- Emotional/Social/Psychological
- Artistic/Creative/Spiritual
Physical Self-Care

- Eat regularly in healthy ways
- Get exercise
- Receive regular, preventative medical care
- Sleep enough
- Take time away from phone, email, TV, etc.
- Spend time outside in fresh air and natural light
Emotional/Social/Psychological Self-Care

- Spend time with family and friends
- Stay in touch with others
- Express emotions, allow yourself to cry and find things that make you happy
- Read for pleasure (not for work)
- Work on your marriage and/or other relationships
- Say “no” to extra responsibilities
Artistic/Creative Spiritual Self-Care

- Give yourself quiet time for self-reflection
- Attend a local place of worship
- Write in a journal
- Spend time in nature
- Enjoy a hobby or learn something new