

9 Keys to Effective Discipline: Expert Advice from the Parents of LifeMinders Family

1. Consider the Meaning of Discipline:

Shawn C. reminds us that "many people equate the word 'discipline' with punishment, when in fact, it means guidance. Leading by example and instilling a sense of self-respect ... are very important upbringing factors."

"Foremost to remember," adds Mary H., "is that the word discipline means to teach."

2. Set Reasonable Expectations and Communicate Them:

IMAMASAN notes that "successful carpenters study the properties of the particular wood being used and respect the difference between oak, mahogany, pine, teak, etc. The same goes for fabrics, plants, autos, musical instruments, etc. A master craftsman does not say, I am the master, I care not for the special properties of the medium. At every stage of development, know what is important and what to let pass ... Both "Yes" and "No" should usually be used with understandable explanations."

Thomas P says that "The first requirement is to love your children. The second is to set reasonable expectations based on explanation of the value or good of the behavior desired. The third, is to reinforce the expectation by example and discussion, and by involving the child in the performance of the desired behavior."

"The most important thing I can do for my daughter when she does something bad," adds Karen S, "is make sure she has a clear understanding of what and why her behavior was unacceptable. At this point, she has something to think about should the same situation arise a second time."

3. Be Consistent

Stan S. says that "The primary keys to effective discipline are consistency and compassion. Everyone feels better when they know what the rules/consequences/rewards are and that each person's needs and feelings are being respected."

Many parent's responses contained the straightforward phrase: "Discipline should be consistent."

4. Compromise and Cooperate Whenever Possible

Though there's always a point at which a parent must take charge, many of you will agree with CANDIDMENT that "Children are people with individual wants and needs. As long as the wants of the child are reasonable, and with consideration for the wants of the rest of the family ... they should be allowed. Children should learn early that cooperation and consideration for others is a must to exist in life."

Dan C. adds "Don't treat them as though, because they are a kid, they don't deserve the same considerations that an adult would. Don't back them into a corner, where they will become defensive, and if discipline is necessary, take the time to explain why you feel the discipline is necessary, and try to link the discipline, directly with the negative behavior."

5. Offer Choices

Dr. Kristi P. suggests that "My most effective technique is to offer choices whenever I'd like the girls'

compliance; that way, they can make a decision, learn to problem-solve, and still gain autonomy ... I attempt to use 'no' only when the girls are acting unsafely; in all other situations, I ask them to show me an alternative behavior. For example, if they are playing with the TV, phone, stereo, or some other 'adult object,' I ask them to take mommy to one of their toys."

Dragica adds that "giving her space is vital ... You have to let loose a lot and yet be firm in order to have control of a child."

6. Ground Your Relationship in Honesty

J. Gordon says "I feel the key to everything is honesty. I have two boys ages 7 and 10 and there is really no subject that is off limits. They are comfortable enough to come to me and talk about anything that is on their minds and they feel that I am a best friend as well as a parent. Keeping an open relationship with your children relinquishes them of any fear to discuss any problems, concerns, or what they do with friends and in their spare time when I am not with them (such as during school). When I have to discipline them for things that they have done, there is never a problem because of the great relationship that we share."

Honesty, most of our parents agree, is the best policy.

7. Make the Punishment Fit the Crime

Kodi advises us to "Make the consequences match the broken rule. Don't give a consequence far beyond the "crime". For instance, if a child breaks a favorite vase when doing something against the rules (like bouncing a ball), explain why the vase meant something to you, make the child clean up the vase (unless they are too little and will cut themselves), and make them do extra chores to pay for the vase. When the vase is paid for, let the child help get a new vase so they feel proud of taking consequences."

Mairin H. adds "I feel that as long as the disciplinary actions I take coincide with the inappropriate behavior (ex. If he is late for school because he was watching cartoons all morning, the next morning TV will be limited to while he is eating breakfast) then I can't really go wrong. Also, this way he knows exactly what behavior was wrong, or inappropriate at that time."

8. Give Respect, Get Respect

Many of you agreed with Dr. Spock about the importance of mutual respect. Timothy S. summed things up nicely when he said "Give Respect, Get Respect. Respect will make your children want to do things to make you proud. When I speak to my daughter, I treat her as a thinking individual, always taking her opinions to mind. This inclusion makes her feel important and helps build self-esteem along with mutual respect. In addition, it sets a platform in which she can make simple decisions at an early age."

9. Make Sure Discipline Begins and Ends in Love

Almost everyone will agree on this. Anita D. reminds us that "discipline without love is abuse."

Suzie H. says "I never start my day without telling my boys that they are loved, and always end it with, "Good night" and "I love you!" Best words in the world for anyone to hear."

There's wisdom there for all of us.

Dear Teacher,

Below is a list of the rest of the practical, timesaving books that are available at www.TimesaversForTeachers.com. Some of them are not only printable, but also “interactive”. This means that you can literally TYPE information directly onto the pages and then SAVE as a new file. “Life is too short to waste time”

Teacher’s Binder: Huge collection of high quality, printable, interactive, often-used classroom forms, sheets and handouts that help teachers with classroom management tasks and paperwork while saving time (256 pages).

Printable and Interactive, Click HERE: www.timesaversforteachers.com/teachers-binder

Report Card and IEP Comments: 180 page collection of 1,830 report card comments for teachers, organized according to subject, topic, length, positive/negative nature.

Click HERE: www.timesaversforteachers.com/report-card-comments

1000 Quick Writing Ideas: Motivate students to begin writing by giving them **1000** writing ideas and prompts!

Click HERE: www.timesaversforteachers.com/1000-quick-writing-ideas (language forms included)

Substitute Teacher Instructions Kit: Organizes substitute teacher instructions effectively and thoroughly!

Printable and Interactive, Click HERE: www.timesaversforteachers.com/substitute-teacher-kit

The Essay Writing Kit: Helps organize common essay planning/writing tasks simpler and far less frustrating for students.

Printable and Interactive, Click HERE: www.timesaversforteachers.com/essay-writing-kit

Spelling Activities for Spelling Lists: Printable, visually attractive spelling activities, ready for use.

Click HERE: www.timesaversforteachers.com/spelling-activities-for-spelling-lists

Classroom Awards, Certificates and Passes: This book contains exactly what the title suggests.

Printable and Interactive, Click HERE: www.timesaversforteachers.com/classroom-awards

Math Timesavers: collection of difficult-to-find, often-used forms, masters and reproducible sheets for a 1-8 class.

Click HERE: www.timesaversforteachers.com/math-timesavers

Just Multiply It: Teaches students multiplication facts in a fun, quick, organized, and visually appealing way!

Click HERE: www.timesaversforteachers.com/just-multiply-it

Just Teach It: Fun end-of-the-year language unit - students research, prepare and teach classmates - very popular!

Click HERE: www.timesaversforteachers.com/just-teach-it